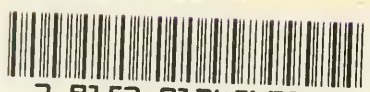


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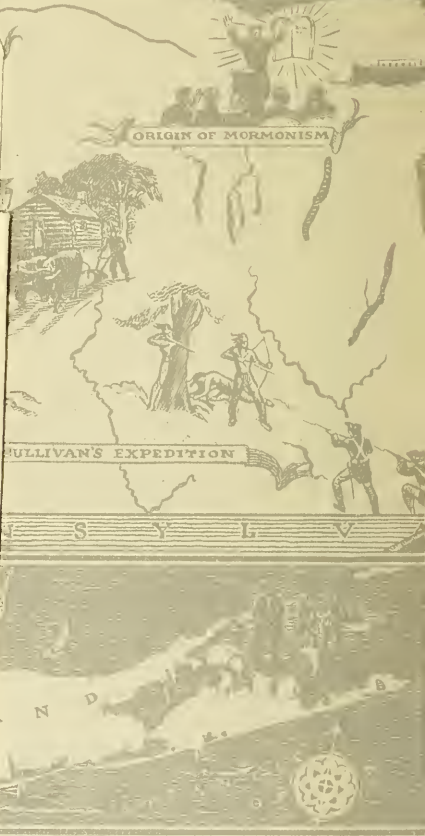
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LA PRESENTATION

JOHNSON HALL 1762

BATTLE OF SARATOGA 1777


LIAM H. SEWARD

MARTIN VAN BUREN

GEORGE CLINTON

SARATOGA
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HISTORY OF THE STATE OF
NEW YORK

IN TEN VOLUMES

EDITED BY
ALEXANDER C. FLICK
STATE HISTORIAN

PUBLISHED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF
THE NEW YORK STATE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



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HISTORY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK



VOLUME FIVE
CONQUERING THE WILDERNESS

NEW YORK M·CM·XXXIV
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS

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PUBLISHED 1934

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
THE PLIMPTON PRESS, NORWOOD, MASS.

FOREWORD

PERHAPS next to the era of discovery and settlement, the period covered in Volume V of the *History of the State of New York* is the most romantic and picturesque. At the close of the Revolution, the white man's occupation was restricted to Long Island, Staten Island, Manhattan Island, the banks of the Hudson northward to the region above Albany, and the Mohawk Valley westward to Fort Stanwix. Thus more than four-fifths of New York State constituted a challenge to the restless inhabitants of the established settlements. This lure into the wild country, won by war and treaty from the motherland and the Indians, appealed to the spirit of adventure, to the desire to improve economic conditions and to a pride as pioneers in having a part in that expanding civilization which conquered the wilderness and created New York State.

Coincident with this expansion to the west and to the north came New York's ratification of the Federal Constitution and its consequent merging into a new Union of sister states. This critical period of recovery from war, of Federalists and Anti-federalists, of the clash of factions led by Hamilton, Burr, the Clintons and Jay, is presented by Dr. E. Wilder Spaulding in his chapter on "The Ratification of the Federal Constitution." New York City was selected as the capital of the new nation and the happenings connected therewith are told in Mr. Edgar Mayhew Bacon's chapter on "Washington's Inauguration in the First Federal Capital."

The remarkable surge of population in wave after wave westward and northward from the older localities—Revolutionary soldiers, land speculators, traders, farmers and professional men, with their settlements and primitive industries—is described and interpreted in three chapters by Dr. Almon W.

Lauber, Dr. Paul D. Evans and Mr. Richard E. Ellsworth. The map in this volume, showing the land grants, will help to clarify the bewildering occupation of the hinterland.

The growth of western and northern New York on the whole received a helpful impetus from the effects of the War of 1812, as is explained in the chapter of Dr. Julius W. Pratt. The rapid development of the newer regions was stimulated by the building of turnpikes, bridges and plank roads, supplemented by the construction of a series of canals. The day of the stage-coach, market wagon and canal boat is described in two chapters by Mr. Oliver W. Holmes and Mr. Noble E. Whitford.

Meanwhile, as a result of these conditions at home and of forces from overseas, there came to New York the Industrial Revolution which in turn transformed the whole social and economic life of the state and opened the way for the series of reforms and improvements which both accompanied and supplemented the pronounced advance in things material. The account of the course taken by the Industrial Revolution in this state is the product of Dr. Harry J. Carman's researches.

Volume V presents a synthetic interpretation, not hitherto attempted, of the history of New York State for the half century or more following the War for Independence. It is hoped that more detailed studies of this period will appear in fruitful local histories and in monographs on special topics, in order to present the wealth of detail unrecorded here.

ALEXANDER C. FLICK

ALBANY, NEW YORK
December, 1933

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MAP OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK . . . SHOWING LAND
GRANTS, PATENTS AND PURCHASES *End of Book*
From Ruth L. Higgins, *Expansion of New York* (Columbus, 1931), with sundry additions. Reproduced by permission of the Ohio State University Press.

END PAPERS and half-title decorations drawn by Paul Laune.



THE SECESSION OF VERMONT

JOHN PELL

Author of "Ethan Allen"



THE SECESSION OF VERMONT

EARLY CLAIMANTS

WHAT is now Vermont was regarded by both France and Holland as a part of their over-sea colonial empire. The Dutch ceded to the English whatever territorial rights they possessed in the region; hence New York as granted to James, Duke of York, had as its eastern boundary the Connecticut River. When, by agreement with New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts pushed their western boundaries to within twenty miles of the Hudson River, the Vermont hinterland still remained as a rather vague part of the province of New York. It should be remembered, however, that prior to 1763 the French claim to that territory had neither been waived nor adjusted.

The Peace of Paris in 1763 not only disposed of French claims to Vermont, but also affected the course of the exploitation of the North American continent more than any other single event since the establishment of the first permanent English plantations a century and a half earlier. The successful culmination of the French and Indian War added another solid block to the pattern of the British Empire. Among its many ramifications was the opening to settlement—and, as it were, to historical significance—of that region lying north of Massachusetts Bay, between Lake Champlain and the Connecticut River.

This country, now known as the state of Vermont, was, in the middle of the eighteenth century, a mountainous wilderness, occupied by a handful of Abnakis and a handful of English, but visited regularly by other Indians and other white men, both engaged in the pursuit of beaver skins. At that time, waterways were the favored means of transportation throughout the world; certainly they gave the only easy access to a wilderness.

Thus it was from the waters of the lake that was to bear his name that Samuel de Champlain, in 1609, had first laid eyes on the Green Mountains, or, as he called them, Verts Monts.

On this significant event was based the claim of the French to the region under discussion. As early as 1666 they had built a fort on an island at the northern end of the lake. Although the fort was abandoned some years later, the island continued to be a favorite camping place for trappers and traders—*coureurs de bois*—attracted to Lake Champlain by the ease of navigation, the abundance of game, and, not impossibly, the beauty of the scenery. Soon after the turn of the century, applications were made for land in the Lake Champlain Valley and, following the French land system, the colonial government parceled it out in huge seigneuries. A map published in 1748 shows that eight of these lay on the east side of the lake, in what is now Vermont territory. One or two attempts at settlement were made, but, on the whole, the wilderness seigneurs paid little attention to their demesnes.

Toward the middle of the eighteenth century the French appreciating the inevitable consequences of the British policy, decided to secure their position on Lake Champlain by military occupation. In pursuance of this plan, Fort Saint Frédéric was built at Crown Point, and Fort Carillon (Ticonderoga) fifteen miles farther south. French settlements and trading posts soon sprang up around these strongholds on both sides of the lake.

While the French were acquiring, by discovery and possession, title to the Champlain Valley on the west of the Green Mountains, the English were establishing themselves in the upper Connecticut Valley, east of the mountains, and in the upper Hudson Valley to the west. The courses of these incursions into the interior were dictated by the presence of navigable waterways.

As early as 1732 Connecticut merchants sent men to the

Great Meadow, in what is now the town of Putney, Vermont, to cut masts for their ships. In 1724 Massachusetts men established a palisaded fort and trading post a few miles north of this, in what is now Brattleboro. In spite of a series of Indian massacres, New England settlers trickled north from this time on.

Meanwhile the governor and Council of New York, looking upon the region northward from Albany as New York territory, began to parcel it out to favorites and land speculators. As early as 1684 Governor Fletcher gave a grant known as the Saratoga patent to Cornelis Van Dyck and six associates, for a tract twelve miles wide extending twenty-two miles north of what is now Mechanicville, on both sides of the Hudson. Since Albany by its charter of 1686 was privileged to buy 500 acres at Schaghticoke, a conflict ensued with Van Dyck and his partners, who in 1708 obtained a new patent more clearly defining the boundaries of their land. The same governor in 1688 granted the Hoosick patent to Maria Van Rensselaer and others, and in 1696 bestowed upon Rev. Godfridus Dellius, a domine at Albany, a tract estimated to be seventy miles long and twelve miles wide, extending from the Battenkill in Washington County northward along the Hudson, Wood Creek and the eastern shore of Lake Champlain to Vergennes, Vermont. For this vast grant he was required to pay only one raccoon skin yearly. Governor Bellomont induced the Assembly to vacate this outrageous grant in 1699, but Dellius denied the validity of the annulment and probably transferred his claim to Rev. John Lydius. For years the Lydius family asserted a shadowy title to the Dellius tract and Col. John Henry Lydius quieted the Indian claims in two sections of it near Fort Edward and planted a settlement.

Another noteworthy grant was the Kayaderosseras patent extending from a point on the Mohawk opposite Schoharie Creek northeastward to the Hudson River, across from Hudson Falls.

This was obtained in 1708 by Nanning Harmense and twelve associates subject to a quitrent of £4 annually in New York currency and an obligation to improve and settle a part of the region within seven years. Other patents were: the Cornelis Schuyler tract of 1,600 acres at the mouth of the Battenkill in 1732, the Walloomsac patent of 12,000 acres in 1739 to James de Lancey and others, the patent for 12,000 acres around Fort Edward to John and Philip Schuyler and six others in 1740, and the Bayard patent of 1,300 acres in 1743. During the French and Indian War the early settlers on these grants, together with squatters, were driven out.

At the conclusion of hostilities, the pioneers returned to civil life and there was a rush of home seekers and land speculators to this frontier region of Albany County, which extended north to Canada and east to the Connecticut. The township* of Cambridge was chartered in 1761 by the sixty proprietors, who included Cadwallader Colden, William Smith and Goldsbrow Banyar. They had patented 31,500 acres and soon settled thirty families in the town. The next year many more patents were taken out in the White Creek Valley, the largest being the Anaquassacook grant of 10,000 acres by the Schermerhorns and others. In 1762 the Kingsbury patent of 26,000 acres was conveyed to James Bradshaw and twenty partners, who chartered a township the same year and commenced a settlement. At the same time the Queensbury patent of 23,000 acres was secured by Daniel Prindle and others; and Abraham Wing built log cabins, a sawmill, a gristmill and an inn for a settlement at Glens Falls. Philip Skene promoted a settlement at Skenesborough,

* In the state of New York the local units of government are designated "towns," and together include the entire area of the state with the exception of incorporated cities. This use of "town" prevailed on Long Island, and to some extent up-state, during the colonial period. In Vermont and adjacent New York territory, "town" and "township" seem to have been without distinction of meaning in the Revolutionary period and they are so used in this chapter.

now Whitehall, in 1761, and two years later had a township chartered.

After the conclusion of peace in 1763, as we have said, the rush of settlers was accelerated. The colonial governor was authorized to allot lands to officers and soldiers with the usual reservations except that no quitrent was to be paid for ten years. Among the numerous patents the largest were one known as the Provincial patent to William Cockroft and twenty commissioned infantry officers of New York for 26,000 acres and another called the Artillery patent to Joseph Walton and twenty-three New York artillery officers for 24,000 acres—both south of Skenesborough. Colden reported to the Lords of Trade in April, 1764, that about four hundred officers and soldiers had applied for land “in that part claimed by New Hampshire.” Meanwhile Philip Skene and twenty-four associates obtained patents for 25,000 acres in 1765 and another patent for 9,000 acres in 1771. The Campbell patent of 10,000 acres and the Argyle patent of 47,450 acres were granted in 1764, on the old Dellius tract, to Scotch Highlanders who had come to the province long before, in 1738–40, under the expectation of a grant of 100,000 acres being given to Laughlin Campbell. The township of Argyle was chartered in 1764. Rev. Thomas Clark with a group of 300 obtained a patent for 12,000 acres at Salem on the Turner patent, which had been obtained in 1764 by James Turner and twenty-four associates from Massachusetts through two New York officials, Oliver de Lancey and Peter Du Bois. The township of Salem was chartered in the same year. Thus it will be seen that by 1765 all of the land between Albany and the heads of Lake George and Lake Champlain had been taken up, some of the patents extending into what is now Vermont, and numerous settlements had been made. It must have been clear to those who watched this process that land speculators would soon turn eastward.

THE RIVAL TOWNS OF BENNINGTON AND PRINCETON

In 1741 New Hampshire, previously associated with Massachusetts Bay under one governor, received an executive of its own. The first incumbent of this office was Benning Wentworth, an aggressive merchant of Portsmouth. Maintaining that the jurisdiction of his province, like that of Connecticut and Massachusetts, extended west to within twenty miles of the Hudson, he granted, in 1749, a township in what is now the southwestern part of Vermont. Appropriately named Bennington, it was divided into sixty-four proprietors' rights, of approximately 360 acres each. One of these rights was reserved as a glebe for the Church of England, one for the first settled minister, one for a school, one for the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and two for the governor. The rest were granted to business men and speculators, who in turn peddled lots to would-be pioneers and investors.

Bennington was followed by a dozen or more similar towns in its vicinity, but the outbreak of the French and Indian War temporarily halted the practice of what may well be called town jobbing. Immediately after the cessation of hostilities, the enterprising governor resumed the practice of granting towns in his doubtful domain west of the Connecticut. By the end of 1763 a total of 131 townships had been created in this territory. A simple arithmetical calculation shows that by reserving two rights in nearly every town for himself, the governor had acquired something like 90,000 acres of wild lands. Furthermore, a study of the lists of grantees discloses that he had dealt liberally with his relatives and friends. Finally, the governor charged a cash commission or fee for each town granted, so that his failure to check the rapid "paper" expansion of his province is understandable.

This procedure did not fail to attract some attention. Cad-

wallader Colden, the newly appointed lieutenant governor of New York, after jealously watching his neighbor's easy profits, determined himself to break in upon these alluring opportunities. Too clever to contest Wentworth on the ground, Colden went straight to the Privy Council in London. Claiming the whole territory west to the Connecticut River by virtue of early Dutch and English pretensions, he secured in 1764 an edict of the king in Council sustaining his contention that the province of New York north of the Massachusetts line extended east to the Connecticut River and included all of the present state of Vermont.

Colden interpreted the edict retroactively. If the land really belonged to New York, he reasoned, Wentworth had had no right to issue grants. Legally, therefore, it had not been granted at all and, as acting governor of New York, he was at liberty to grant it over again. This he proceeded to do, without delay. In May, 1765, he chartered a tract of 26,000 acres as the town of Princeton. Although there were a number of grantees, three men—James Duane, a prominent New York lawyer; John Tabor Kempe, attorney general of the province; and Walter Rutherford—soon gained control of the tract.

Land speculation was then, as long before and after, the great American gambling game. As, one after another, new sections of virgin country were opened up to settlement, speculators bought up vast tracts and peddled them to prospective settlers. Unfair as the system was to actual settlers—the empire builders—it was encouraged by the provincial governors, who not only charged fees for issuing grants, but in many cases speculated in land on their own account. Neither Wentworth nor Colden was blameless in this respect.

In the case of the Vermont lands, there was a dual aspect to the speculation because of the fact, as already shown, that two governors issued two sets of grants to two sets of speculators.

While Wentworth's set of grants antedated Colden's, it is doubtful whether New Hampshire's jurisdiction had ever included Vermont. The New York courts were ready to uphold Colden and the New Hampshire courts favored Wentworth, for it must be admitted that the provincial judges, as well as the provincial governors, were eagerly hazarding their personal funds in land futures. So, as usually occurs on frontiers, the battle was fought with guns, clubs and bitter epithets, instead of with briefs and exhortation.

Duane, Kempe and Rutherford, the grantees of Princeton, and a few other speculators who later joined forces with them, became the leaders of the New York faction. They had on their side the advantage of financial resources, as well as legal and political connections, but their opponents included the actual settlers of the disputed territory.

Within a year Lieutenant Governor Colden had issued grants for over 130,000 acres of Vermont lands. The grants, needless to say, were gobbled up by the speculative group and their associates. In November, 1765, Sir Henry Moore was appointed governor of New York. Colden, who all through this period occupied the position of a permanent undersecretary, lost no time in initiating his new superior into the lucrative secrets of the land-grant game. During Moore's four years in office, he granted roughly 150,000 acres in the disputed territory.

No doubt the New York authorities and land speculators felt that it would be a distinct triumph if the disputed area were organized politically as an integral part of the province, but separated from Albany County. By 1765 there was considerable agitation to reorganize this northeastern area; one petition asked that five new counties be created—Colden, Sterling, Manchester, Kingsbury and Pitt; and others suggested the formation of but one new county. After a good deal of discussion, but apparently without much opposition, the New York Assembly,

acting on the governor's proposal, on July 3, 1765, created Cumberland County in the southeastern corner of present Vermont and set up a government similar to that in other parts of the province except that representation in the Assembly was denied for the time being. This act was disallowed by the king in Council in 1767, but the next year by letters patent the New York government recreated the county, which in 1771 had a population of about 4,000. Then in 1769, following a petition of 120 inhabitants, by a provincial "order in Council," Gloucester County with about 700 people was erected to the north of Cumberland and one of the towns was given to King's College. In 1772 Charlotte County with 268 families was set off. Cumberland County sent representatives to the New York colonial Assembly in 1773.

Bennington, as stated above, was the first of the New Hampshire towns granted: it was also the first settled. A group of six families led by Samuel Robinson moved there from Hardwick, Massachusetts, in 1761. They were followed by numerous pioneers who came to Bennington and neighboring towns. After the first hard years of clearing away the forest, building houses and barns, and cultivating crops, it was a shock to them to learn from agents of the New York grantees that the king had placed their settlements in New York jurisdiction, and that they were expected to buy their land over again from a new set of landlords. Under the circumstances, it seemed to them, there was only one thing to do — appeal to the king.

GEORGE III ORDERS TITLES EXAMINED

So Samuel Robinson was chosen to go to London, where he found an unexpected ally in the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, which had received a proprietor's right in each of Benning Wentworth's towns. Together they

procured from the king in 1767 a decree ordering the governor of New York "without the smallest delay" to stop granting lands in the disputed territory until the matter had been examined in the courts.

The weight of evidence appears to bear out the theory that, before the decree of the king in Council of 1764, Vermont (then known as the New Hampshire Grants) was honestly considered by the local authorities and by the New England settlers in general as a part of New Hampshire. Maps of the period show New Hampshire extending west to Lake Champlain.

It is possible to understand the point of view of the settlers who had in good faith bought land grants from an authorized representative of the king in what was generally considered to be his jurisdiction, and had furthermore cleared and settled the land purchased by them. When they opposed Yorkers (as the New York grantees were called) who came to drive them away from their homes or make them pay for them over again, they were defending their birthright and their fortunes.

Unfortunately, Governor Moore was receiving substantial fees from his land grants, and there were speculators who were willing to pay even for doubtful titles in the Lake Champlain Valley. The governor ordered that no more grants be made on the Connecticut River. Nevertheless the edict did give the settlers something to show when Yorkers tried to seize their farms.

There had been two good reasons, however, for the king's action in 1764: the influence of the New York officials at court, and the preference, on the part of the court, for the New York type of provincial government over that of New Hampshire. In one of his letters to the Board of Trade, Colden mentioned that "the revenue to the Crown, if the lands are settled under this province, will be greater than if granted under New Hampshire, in proportion to the difference of quit-rent which I am

informed is 1s sterling p 100 acres in that Province and is by His Majesty's instructions fixed here at 2/6 sterg."

As time passed, the controversy became acute. When surveyors were sent by New York grantees to locate their property, they found it occupied by New Hampshire settlers, who refused to let them run their lines. The Yorkers, finding themselves repulsed with sticks, stones and insults, finally had recourse to the law. A certain Maj. John Small and the Rev. Mr. Slaughter, New York title holders, brought actions of ejectment, to be tried in Albany, against the actual occupants of their land, James Breakenridge, Samuel Rose, Isaiah Carpenter and Josiah Fuller.

The New Hampshire proprietors of the land in question were Connecticut men from the neighborhood of Salisbury. A good many of them had not yet moved north, and some of course had merely bought grants to sell. When they heard of the impending trials, they realized that this was to be the test case of their speculation. A number of them met in Sharon in January, 1770, and decided to hold a general meeting of Hampshire claimants in March, at Charles Burrell's house in Canaan. At that meeting it was agreed that each proprietor should pay half a dollar to be used for defending the cause. Among those who attended was Ethan Allen.

His presence at this meeting, and participation in the events which followed it, is a matter of the greatest significance. He and his brothers, particularly Ira, and their cousin, Remember Baker, were to the New Hampshire grantees, from this time on, exactly what Duane and his associates were to the Yorkers. All of these men, so far as their relations with the political development of Vermont are concerned, were essentially land speculators.

Ethan Allen described the Albany land trial in words which cannot be paralleled.

The plaintiffs [he said] appearing in great state and magnificence, which, together with their junto of land thieves, made a brilliant appearance; but the defendants appearing but in ordinary fashion having been greatly fatigued by hard labor wrought on the disputed premises, and their cash much exhausted, made a very disproportionate figure at court. In fine, interest, conviction and grandeur being all on one side, easily turned the scale against the honest defendants, and judgments without mercy, in favor of the claimants under New York were given against them.

At the close of the trial the Yorkers had the law on their side, but the Yankees had possession on theirs, and they spent the next five years demonstrating that possession is nine points of the law. When Lieutenant Governor Colden heard that the New Hampshire settlers were determined to cultivate their farms and defend their homes in spite of the decision of the court, he was furious and threatened to drive them into the Green Mountains. In pamphlets and at town meetings they dared him to test his laws against the law of self-preservation and called themselves the "Green Mountain Boys."

Ethan Allen, styling himself "Commandant of the Green Mountain Boys," became a sort of Robin Hood. Whenever New York surveyors appeared in the neighborhood of Bennington, they were met by a reception committee armed with guns, clubs, whips and stones. When the sheriff of Albany, accompanied by a posse of 150 men, came to take possession of James Breakenridge's farm for the New York title holder, Breakenridge and his neighbors assembled with such a show of force that the sheriff did not dare approach the house to serve the writ. As a result, Tryon, the newly elected governor of New York, outlawed Ethan Allen and eight of his assistants, offering a reward for their heads.

Meanwhile, the Allen brothers and Remember Baker continued to buy New Hampshire land grants from discouraged

Decr. 1774

A B R I E F
N A R R A T I V E
O F T H E
P R O C E E D I N G S
O F T H E G O V E R N M E N T O F
N E W - Y O R K,

RELATIVE TO THEIR OBTAINING THE JURISDICTION OF
THAT
LARGE DISTRICT OF LAND,
TO THE WESTWARD FROM
CONNECTICUT RIVER,

Which, antecedent thereto, had been patented by his Majesty's
Governor and Council of the Government of
N E W - H A M P S H I R E.

AND ALSO,
O F T H E M O N O P O L I Z I N G C O N D U C T O F T H E G O V E R N M E N T
O F N E W - Y O R K, in their subsequently patenting
Part of the same Land, and oppressing the
Grantees and Settlers under N e w - H a m p s h i r e.

T O G E T H E R W I T H,
A R G U M E N T S D E M O N S T R A T I N G T H A T T H E P R O P E R T Y O F
T H O S E L A N D S W A S C O N V E Y E D F R O M T H E C R O W N
T O T H E N E W - H A M P S H I R E G R A N T E E S, b y V i r t u e o f
t h e i r r e s p e c t i v e C h a r t e r s.

W I T H
R E M A R K S O N A P a m p h l e t e n t i t l e d, " A S t a t e o f t h e R i g h t
o f t h e C o l o n y o f N e w - Y o r k, " &c. and on the Narrative of
t h e P r o c e e d i n g s s u b s e q u e n t t o t h e r o y a l A d j u d e c a t i o n, c o n -
c e r n i n g t h e L a n d s t o t h e W e s t w a r d, o f C o n n e c t i c u t R i v e r,
l a t e l y u s u r p ' d b y N e w - H a m p s h i r e. I n t e n d e d a s a n A p -
p e n d i x t o t h e G e n e r a l A s s e m b l y ' s S t a t e o f t h e R i g h t o f t h e
C o l o n y o f N e w - Y o r k, (w i t h R e s p e c t t o i t ' s E a s t e r n B o u n -
d a r y o n C o n n e c t i c u t R i v e r, s o f a r a s c o n c e r n s t h e l a t e E n -
c r o a c h m e n t s u n d e r t h e G o v e r n m e n t o f N e w - H a m p s h i r e) p u b -
l i s h e d a t t h e i r S e s s i o n, 1773.

B y E T H A N A L L E N.
B I N N I N G T O N, 23d September, 1774.

H A R T F O R D:
P r i n t e d b y E B E N. W A T S O N, n e a r t h e G r e a t B r i d g e.

ETHAN ALLEN ON THE GOVERNMENT
OF NEW YORK

holders—at bargain prices, needless to say. They traded in and out a good deal, but over a period of years they were buyers on balance, accumulating something like 100,000 acres of wild lands, or rather the somewhat doubtful New Hampshire titles to these lands. They worked together under a partnership agreement, which they called the Onion River Company. Like most speculators, the Allens became, before very long, somewhat overextended. There was no question, it was clear, of buying confirmation of their grants from the New York authorities. There was only one way left in which they could make their speculation good, and that was by inducing the settlers to resist the encroachments of the Yorkers.

FIRST THREATS OF SECESSION

There is a good deal of evidence that the British authorities sympathized with settlers who had in good faith bought title to a specified parcel of land from a royal governor and had cleared and settled it—even though it was later decided that the governor's jurisdiction did not include this land. Nevertheless, although the king in 1767 had ordered the New York authorities to grant no more land until he had looked into the problem, and although the Board of Trade reported to the Privy Council in 1770 that the actual settlers under New Hampshire Grants "ought to be left in entire possession of such lands as they have actually cultivated and improved," yet William Tryon, upon becoming the governor of New York in 1771, issued a proclamation reiterating New York's claim to the land in question and proceeded to issue grants and attempted to set up the machinery of government therein.

Although the region had been divided into counties, and New York sheriffs and justices had been appointed, there is no evidence that any of them were able to perform their normal

duties. Sheriffs were sent into the grants with writs of possession, to be repelled not only with sarcasm but also with violence. Surveyors who attempted to run lines for New York grantees were, in Ethan Allen's words, "chastised with the twigs of the wilderness." Yorkers who began settlements on their grants were routed out of their beds in the middle of the night to see their cabins burned and their crops destroyed. Nevertheless, although the Green Mountain Boys were far from gentle in their treatment of their enemies, it must be said, to their credit, that no deaths resulted from their activities. When the proprietors of the Walloomsac patent, in the west of Cumberland County, sent surveyors to divide the land, Governor Tryon in 1769 issued a proclamation for the arrest of "the armed men" who drove the surveyors away.

During the early seventies, when stirring events were taking place in Boston, New York City and the other seaboard towns, the "Hampshire Grants" were, to all intents and purposes, an independent nation, wedged in between the northern part of New York and New Hampshire. Bennington was the capital and the government a small group of men largely influenced by the Allens, who met at frequent intervals at Joseph Fay's Cata-mont Tavern, and whose decisions were ruthlessly executed by the Green Mountain Boys. Indeed as early as 1769 eleven Connecticut missionaries of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel appealed to Sir William Johnson to help erect a "new Government" in Vermont with Partridge Thatcher as governor.

By 1775 the population, stimulated by the Allens' real-estate activities (now beyond the purely speculative stage), had risen to considerable numbers and a degree of stability and prosperity. A movement was on foot to petition the king to set apart the Grants as a separate province, and at a convention held at Westminster in April, 1775, the people voted to "wholly renounce and resist" the rule of New York. But just at that time the

Revolution broke out, completely altering the aspect of their affairs.

The part played by Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys in the capture of Fort Ticonderoga is well known. Its only bearing on this subject is as proof that the sympathies of the Vermonters were as whole-heartedly with the cause of the Revolution as were those of the farmers who fought at Lexington and Concord.

The Revolution upset existing institutions. There was no extended period of chaos, however, for the different colonies set up local governments by committees without delay. They, in turn, sent delegates to the Continental Congress. The people of the Grants had their county and local committees appointed by recommendation of the Continental Congress and the Provincial Congress. Although the secessionists did not wish to be represented in the extra-legal body which was directing affairs in New York, still the Cumberland County convention of local committeemen on June 6, 1775, chose three delegates to it; and also sent deputies to subsequent Provincial Congresses. Gloucester and Charlotte Counties also sent representatives. It was significant that on June 21, 1776, in electing new delegates to the Provincial Congress to vote on independence and to draw up a new form of government, the Cumberland County committee reserved the right to secede from New York. But two of its deputies, Stevens and Sessions, publicly asserted in the Congress, on the following September 21, that they personally acknowledged New York's jurisdiction over the county.

While the people of these three new counties were not directly represented by delegates of their own selection in the Continental Congress, yet their committees of correspondence were in direct touch with that body and the Green Mountain Boys were serving as a regiment in the Continental Army. Furthermore the location of the Grants left them unprotected from an

invasion from Canada. Realizing that the situation demanded action, some of the leading men called a convention of delegates from the towns lying west of the Green Mountains to meet at Cephas Kent's tavern in Dorset on January 16, 1776. At the determination of this convention, Heman Allen, Ethan's brother, was sent to Philadelphia to present a petition to the Continental Congress, stating, among other things, "that we are entirely willing to do all in our power in the general cause under the Continental Congress . . . but are not willing to put ourselves under the honorable, the provincial Congress of New York in such manner as might in future be detrimental to our private property." After due consideration a committee of Congress tactfully "recommended to the petitioners for the present to submit to the government of New York, and contribute their assistance with their countrymen in the contest between Great Britain and the United Colonies; but that such submission ought not to prejudice the rights of them; nor be construed to affirm or admit the jurisdiction of New York in and over the country; and when the present troubles are at an end, the final determination of their right may be mutually referred to proper judges."

This was not the kind of suggestion which the people of the Grants were looking for. Accordingly, upon Heman's return, a second convention, this time including delegates from the towns on both sides of the mountains, was assembled at Cephas Kent's. Disregarding Congress' suggestion, the delegates, with only one dissenting voice, voted "that application be made to the inhabitants of said Grants to form the same into a separate district." This was the first step toward the formation of an independent state.

It is easier, however, for a group of delegates at a convention to express their strong feelings than to govern a thinly populated mountainous district, unprotected from invasion by an

aggressive and hostile enemy, particularly when no established government, no funds and no machinery for raising them exist. Yet the spirit of the people was strong and there were men equal to the situation. Although Ethan Allen had been captured in an unsuccessful attempt to repeat his Ticonderoga coup at Montreal, his brother Ira—perhaps the most astute of the three—took a leading hand in events at home. He was assisted by Thomas Chittenden, a prosperous squire, who was respected by the people on both sides of the mountains; James Breakenridge, the Bennington farmer; Joseph Fay, the proprietor of the famous Catamount Tavern; and his son, Jonas, a doctor.

Under the guidance of these men, a series of conventions was held, at which a more or less formal government was set up. It was arranged to raise funds by selling the ungranted lands and by confiscating Tories' estates, and a militia was provided for, to form some sort of a defense against the threatened British invasion.

INDEPENDENCE PROCLAIMED

On January 16, 1777—six months after the Declaration of Independence—a convention, meeting at Westminster, resolved, "That the district of land commonly called and known by the name of the New Hampshire Grants be a new and separate state; and for the future conduct themselves as such." Since the great majority of the inhabitants had come from Connecticut, the name of New Connecticut was adopted. A messenger was sent to Philadelphia to inform Congress of the action and to ask that body to grant the privilege of a representative. It was also provided that the Declaration of Independence of New Connecticut should be printed in the newspapers, but as there were no newspapers in New Connecticut, and as the New York newspapers were extremely hostile to the fledgling state, the *Hartford Courant* received the honor of printing the tidings.

A convention met at Windsor the following July and adopted a constitution for the new state. It was modeled on the constitution of Pennsylvania, written the year before, but was unique in one respect—the prohibition of slavery. At this time a name suggested by Dr. Thomas Young, a friend of Ethan Allen—Vermonts or Vermont—was adopted instead of New Connecticut. To the New York State Assembly which met in 1777, Charlotte County had elected four members and their successors were chosen till 1784, but both Cumberland and Gloucester were recorded in the records “no returns.”

Another convention was called for December to set the new government in operation but, before it could convene, Burgoyne’s army had captured Crown Point and Ticonderoga, had crossed Lake Champlain and marched south from Skenesborough along the border claimed by Vermont, and was encamped at Bemis Heights—a fact beside which even the evolution of the new state paled.

The stories of Hubbardton and Bennington, Stark and the Vermonters, are well known but have no bearing on this discussion. The farmers and mountaineers set aside state-making, and did what they could for the cause of the freedom of the United States. After Burgoyne’s surrender, they returned to their other avocation. The first General Assembly of the independent state of Vermont convened at Windsor in March, 1778. Thomas Chittenden was chosen governor “by a great majority of votes.” Joseph Marsh became deputy governor, and Ira Allen, treasurer. Laws were established and the militia organized.

It must not be supposed that the people of the Grants were united in a desire to become a separate state. For instance on March 18, 1778, representatives of the towns of Guilford, Brattleboro, Putney, New Fane, Hinsdale, Rockingham, Westminister, Weathersfield, and probably Springfield, met at Brattleboro and drew up a protest against secession from New York as im-

politic and dangerous. But the tireless efforts of Ira Allen and his associates, who called themselves the Council of Safety, aided by the dramatic appeal of the battle of Bennington, built up the secession project.

The greatest obstacle was, of course, the attitude of New York. A good many of the men who had been engaged in land speculating were now the leaders of the Revolutionary government of that state. James Duane and Robert Livingston represented it in the Continental Congress. When they heard of the separatist movement in Vermont, they remembered the treatment which their envoys had received at the hands of the Green Mountain Boys.

George Clinton, the first governor of New York State, had, along with everybody else of any financial resources, speculated in Vermont wild lands. Nevertheless, with the approval of the Assembly, Clinton issued a proclamation repealing the acts of outlawry which had been passed against Ethan Allen and some of the other leaders, and offered to confirm New Hampshire titles wherever actual settlements had been made, provided only that the Vermonters would acknowledge the political jurisdiction of New York.

There are two reasons which made Clinton's proclamation of no avail. First, it came too late. The people of Vermont had just completed their government and had no intention of undoing their handiwork without giving it a trial. Second, it did not benefit the great speculation in wild lands of the Allens, who were, it must always be remembered, the leaders of Vermont thought and sentiment.

Copies of the proclamation were received at landlord Fay's, in Bennington, coincident with the return of Ethan Allen from his captivity. After being exchanged for an English officer, he had been received by Washington at his headquarters. This, together with the memory of Ticonderoga and the fact of his hav-

ing been abroad, under uncomfortable circumstances, conferred on Allen a glamour which added to his already great prestige in the eyes of the Vermonters. In fact, his return at this psychological moment probably gave the faltering separatist movement the renewed vitality which saved it from yielding to Clinton's magnanimity.

Allen sat down (probably at Fay's tavern) and wrote a reply to Clinton's proclamation which indicated that, whether or not there were newspapers in Vermont, there was no dearth of literary fecundity. "The overtures in the proclamation set forth," he wrote, "are either romantic or calculated to deceive woods people, who, in general may not be supposed to understand law, or the power of a legislative authority." The addition of abuse to rebelliousness did not increase New York's affection for her stepchild. At the same time the hostility of New Hampshire was aroused by the attempt of sixteen towns situated on the east bank of the Connecticut River to secede from New Hampshire and join with their neighbors across the river in their move for independence.

Meanwhile, when a report had reached Bennington that Congress was considering the Vermont situation, Ethan Allen was sent to Philadelphia to see what could be done. He found the New York delegates, as has been shown in another chapter, adamant in their hostility and the New Hampshire delegates angered by Vermont's apparent willingness to annex part of her territory. Realizing that the situation was critical, Allen promised the New Hampshire congressmen that the union with the sixteen towns would not be consummated. This somewhat abated their hostility, but no action was taken on the Vermont question at this time. Congress, in fact, adopted a policy of postponing action on the embarrassing situation, hoping perhaps that the Vermont separatist movement would collapse. The existence of a considerable minority of the inhabitants who

were not in favor of the movement was advertised by open opposition, on several occasions, in the southeastern part of Cumberland County. Such uprisings were quickly quashed, however, usually by a band of the old Green Mountain Boys led by Ethan Allen, who had been appointed brigadier general of the Vermont militia.

THE STATE OF VERMONT ENTERS THE UNION

These activities were not confined to encouraging conformity to the government for, it must be remembered, the British, even after Burgoyne's defeat, maintained a large army in Canada and were in possession of the forts at Ticonderoga and Crown Point. It would have been easy for them to send an army of ten thousand men to annihilate the upstart republic. As the British authorities realized, however, it would be one thing to pillage the little settlements at Bennington and Windsor, but quite another to maintain order in a mountainous wilderness inhabited by unruly snipers. On the other hand, since these people apparently had rebelled against the rebellion, what would be more natural for them than to find their way, with a little encouragement, back into the fold of his majesty's subjects? So encouragement in the form which worked so well with ministers and parliamentarians at home—bribes and promises of promotion—was accordingly offered to Allen and the other Vermont leaders.

Exactly what their reaction to these advances was, is not known, but in order to judge their actions it is important to put oneself in their position. Their allegiance was to Vermont. They were fighting desperately for their lives, their homes and their fortunes. If, by showing a willingness to negotiate with the British, they could postpone and perhaps prevent the invasion of their territory by a large army, they undoubtedly felt

they would be serving the best interests of their people. Furthermore, they would gain a strong bargaining point to use with Congress. Whether or not all this was premeditated, the upshot was that for the balance of the war a strong army was kept at bay in Canada by a series of conversations.

Emboldened by this development, the Vermonters renewed the union with the sixteen New Hampshire towns, as well as some additional ones, and even went so far as to form another union with a group of New York towns. An army of two hundred New York militiamen, sent to regain these lost towns, was defeated by the Vermonters at Walloomsac. Mrs. Bleecker, an Albany lady who witnessed the fray, wrote to a friend:

General Allen was bound up in gold lace, and felt himself grand as the Great Mogul. They had an old spiked up field piece, which, however, looked martial.

Congress began at last to take Vermont seriously. General Washington wrote a letter to Governor Chittenden, in which he said: "You have nothing to do but withdraw your jurisdiction to your old limits and obtain an acknowledgment of independence and sovereignty." The Vermont Assembly, meeting at Bennington shortly after this letter was received, annulled the unions. Unfortunately, now that Washington had won the war, Congress no longer listened to his demands, and took no further steps to solve the Vermont problem. When it became clear that Congress intended to repudiate Washington's promise, the Allens, Chittenden and the other leaders turned away in disgust and did everything in their power to render Vermont a British province.

Such a plan was not without practical advantages. On the one hand, communication was much easier between Vermont and Montreal via Lake Champlain than between Vermont and the seacoast colonies. On the other, the thirteen colonies were

heavily burdened with debts, whereas Vermont, which had fought its battles with words, had met the necessary expenses through the proceeds of confiscated Tories' estates. To be admitted to the Confederation would mean being admitted to a share in the debt.

The signing of the Peace Treaty in 1783 removed the necessity for carrying on the secret negotiations with the British. Vermont was an independent republic. She was furthermore in a great deal better shape, both financially and morally, than the Confederation of the United States. She proceeded to negotiate commercial treaties with Canada, to coin money, establish post offices and post roads, grant public lands and govern her people with a minimum of expense and difficulty. Her self-sufficiency and freedom from debt removed the incentive to press the negotiations to become a part of the United States.

When, in 1788, however, the Federal Constitution was finally ratified, it became apparent that the United States might, after all, rise to permanent importance. There was by then a new group of younger men in Vermont politics who favored joining the Union, if it could be done without sacrificing their property. On the other side, Hamilton, who had been largely responsible for the ratification of the Constitution, was urging the New York Assembly to recognize Vermont's independence.

After a certain amount of preliminary discussion and correspondence, New York and Vermont appointed commissioners who held a series of meetings in New York City during the summer and fall of 1790, finally agreeing, in substance, that Vermont should pay \$30,000 to New York for her land claims and that New York should in return recognize the former's independence with boundaries as they are today, which included all of the counties of Cumberland and Gloucester and part of Charlotte. The \$30,000 was divided among 76 claimants for losses in sums ranging from \$5.49 to \$7,218.94. Lands from

90 to 3,840 acres were allotted to 119 "Vermont Sufferers" who had moved to Chenango County. The legislatures of both states adopted this agreement the following winter, when the Vermont legislature ratified the Constitution of the United States.

President Washington reported these actions to Congress in February, 1791. Fortunately for Vermont, Kentucky had also applied for admission to the Union, so that it was possible to admit both states without upsetting the balance between northern and southern states. Bills were accordingly passed by both houses admitting the two states and providing for their representatives in Congress. Vermont became a member of the United States on March 4, 1791.

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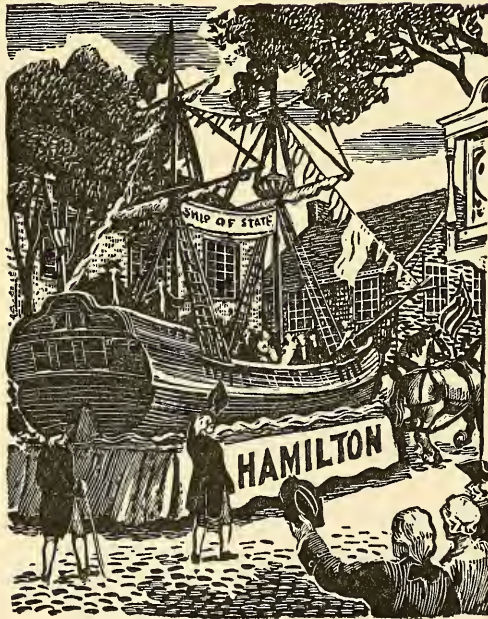
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THE RATIFICATION OF
THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION

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THE RATIFICATION OF THE FEDERAL CONSTITUTION

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUND

IN THE critical decade of the 1780's in New York history, the constitution of 1777 received its first real test, free from the embarrassments of war. New York, like the other states, passed through an era of economic stress and reconstruction. And, what is more often forgotten, the state and the Union were finding their economic balance and progressing toward commercial, industrial and agricultural stability and prosperity even before the fathers met at Philadelphia "to form a more perfect Union," and many months before George Washington became the first President of the United States.

These years saw the rise of the first self-conscious political parties in the history of the state, the Federalists and the Anti-federalists. At the end of the Revolution, the merchants of New York and of the smaller commercial towns on the Hudson were still the backbone of the conservative or, to anticipate the later use of the word, of the Federalist group. Possibly a tenth of the state's population was commercial in character, but that tenth played a part in politics that was far out of proportion to its size. There were a few merchants like John Lamb, Alexander McDougall and Melancton Smith among the Clintonian democrats, but the great majority were followers of Hamilton. These Federalist merchants so dominated New York County that it was invariably represented in the Assembly by a conservative delegation which favored any measures that might strengthen the central government and foster American commerce.

Closely associated with the merchants were the lawyers, whose prestige had increased greatly with the Revolution. Antifederalists included George Clinton, Samuel Jones, John Lansing and

a number of others, chiefly of the counties farthest removed from New York. On the other hand, the Federalists boasted of a most imposing array of lawyers and judges in their ranks, John Jay, Alexander Hamilton, James Duane, Robert R. Livingston, Ezra L'Hommedieu, Josiah Ogden Hoffman, Richard Varick, Richard Harison, John Sloss Hobart, Robert Troup and Richard Morris. Many of these Federalist barristers were of aristocratic lineage and were closely allied by birth or interest with the great manor lords and with the merchants. The smaller group of bankers in New York City were naturally conservatives and therefore Federalists. They were often merchants or lawyers as well.

The lower middle and lower classes in the towns were generally disfranchised by the high property qualifications and so were less important politically. But though the mechanics and small tradespeople had been violent patriots of the democratic school during the Revolution, and though they might protest when the legislature refused the mechanics of New York City a charter of incorporation and might send an independent spirit like William Goforth to the Assembly, they seem to have submitted generally to the political leadership of the commercial interests.

The exigencies of war and the bounties offered by the state during the Revolution produced a crop of feeble and none-too-lucrative manufacturing establishments. The depression of the mid-eighties, however, destroyed many, and the proprietors of those that remained played as a group no distinct part in the politics of the era.

LAND AND COMMERCE AS PARTY FACTORS

Because the state was chiefly agricultural, its land system is of considerable importance in its political history. The counties

of Albany, Dutchess and Westchester were the homes of the great manors and estates, which included hundreds of thousands of acres, leased to tenants.

The consequence of the restrictions upon the tenants was that they and the landlords became opponents in politics. Those tenants who enjoyed the franchise, like any debtor class, were opposed to the introduction of a central government to be controlled by the propertied classes and involving increased taxation, for by the terms of their leases the manorial tenants paid the taxes. Consequently in 1788 they voted for delegations opposed to ratifying the proposed Federal Constitution.

The landlords, on the other hand, were very generally Federalists, and in 1788 favored ratification of the Federal Constitution. Although Pierre Van Cortlandt, John Lansing and John Williams, all landlords of considerable importance, belonged to the Clintonian faction, the Federalists claimed such landed aristocrats as Stephen Van Rensselaer, Robert Livingston, and most of the other Livingstons, James Duane, Philip Schuyler, and a number of others, who rented to tenants or held large tracts of unsettled lands to which they hoped to attract tenants. Other Federalists like Hamilton and Jay, who speculated in unsettled lands, were allied by marriage to these aristocrats of the soil.

It should be added that the independent farmers, who often outnumbered the tenant farmers even in the counties where the great estates were most prominent, were also generally Anti-federal in their principles.

As the state approached the important clash over ratification, it became increasingly clear that the merchants, lawyers, men of wealth, great landowners and land speculators were in the Hamiltonian camp; and that the numerous yeomanry and tenantry of the country, with some of the more humble of the townspeople, were with the Clintonian majority. Geographically

the division was that of New York and her immediate neighbors against the river counties, or perhaps more accurately it was the conflict of the regions that had access to the sea with the agrarian back country. This back country was naturally indifferent to the hardships of sea captains and traders and to the supplications of Congress for support. As a result, New York became one of the least nationalistic of the states. It was content to hold its destiny in its own hands, to defend its own frontiers, to levy taxes on exports when it wished, to support itself largely by a state tariff—seven New York tariff acts were passed in the eighties—and to be free to refuse a begging central government when it wished. George Clinton, seeing the immense natural advantages of New York, believed that the state should remain the master of its own fate, conducting its own affairs with a minimum of interference, and that the central government, while it might require some strengthening in matters of detail, was equal to the occasion.

During the later years of the war, New York had not been markedly Antifederal. In 1780, as has been shown elsewhere, it was the first state to cede its western land claims to the central government. Later in the same year, Governor Clinton was largely responsible for urging that states which were delinquent in playing their part in the war be coerced by the Continental army itself. Furthermore, Clinton recommended participation by New York in the Hartford Convention of November, 1780, declaring to the legislature that, "while Congress only recommends, and the different states deliberate upon the propriety of a recommendation, we cannot expect a union of force or council." In 1782, the legislature went on record in favor of a constitutional convention. In 1784, the Congress received a warm welcome to New York City, and was given the use of several public buildings.

On the other hand, the state had often showed itself to be

isolationist in principle and hostile toward any extension of congressional powers. As early as 1776, it had protested against congressional appointment of officers for troops raised in New York. In 1777 it instructed its delegates to oppose all such resolutions of Congress as might infringe the rights or jurisdiction of New York.

Although New York chose able men as its representatives in the Congress, it showed itself strangely indifferent to keeping a proper quota of delegates at the several sessions, and was often entirely unrepresented. For instance, in the summer of 1783 New York was represented only two or three days during a period of two months, and the all-important treaty of peace with Great Britain remained unratified for some time because Congress lacked a quorum to do business. Even when the Congress was sitting in New York City, the state was often represented poorly or not at all.

IMPOSTS BRING DEMAND FOR A REVISION OF CONFEDERATION

The end of the Revolution brought a growing indifference to Federal measures. In the half dozen war years after the framing of the state constitution, most of the New York delegates to the Congress were men like Hamilton and Livingston, who were to become champions of Federal powers and later of the Federal Constitution. But in 1784 the legislature began to change the character of the delegation by naming men like John Lansing, Jr., and Zephaniah Platt, who were later to oppose the Federal Constitution; and in 1785 John Lawrence was the lone member in a delegation of five whose principles were Federal. The years 1784 to 1786 represented the nadir of Federal prestige in New York.

If any one disaster encountered by the Congress in the

“critical period” was chiefly responsible for the discarding of the Articles of Confederation and the adoption of the new Federal Constitution, it was the failure of the states to grant to the Congress the collection and proceeds of the imposts, or tariff on imports. For this failure New York was largely responsible. New York at first appeared willing to grant Congress the impost power, as proposed by the Hartford Convention of 1780 at which the state was represented. New York State, on March 19, 1781, authorized the Federal body “to levy a duty [of not over 5 per cent] on foreign merchandise imported into this state,” and to collect that duty by officials appointed by the Congress itself. It is probable, however, that the states-rights governor was pleased when Congress did not immediately get, by unanimous consent, the authority it so much needed.

The agitation for a congressional impost grant continued and the New York legislature proposed a convention of all the states to suggest plans for strengthening the Union. But when the war was virtually over, New York cooled toward the proposition. Peace would revive commerce, argued the isolationists, and New York City would regain a substantial revenue as port of entry for the trade of much of New Jersey and Connecticut as well as of New York State. The governor and his followers were reluctant to turn this advantage over to a distant super-state. Consequently the legislature, now strongly Clintonian, on March 15, 1783, repealed the impost grant it had made to Congress in 1781, and insisted that the collectors should be appointed by and responsible to the state.

Significantly enough, the great majority of the votes in the New York Assembly favoring increased Federal authority came from New York County, and its neighbors, Westchester, Richmond, Kings, Queens and Suffolk, with some support from the counties of Albany and Dutchess which contained the commercial towns of Albany and Poughkeepsie. It was the seaboard

with its commercial interests that was already championing Federalism.

The legislature in 1784 refused to abandon its position that the collectors should be state officials. The electorate joined in the discussion, and the newspapers printed numerous controversial letters on the subject of Federal powers and the impost. Abraham Yates, as "Rough Hewer, Jr.," wrote that republicanism could survive only in small states, and that to endow the Congress with additional power was "but to form a mighty continental legislative, in time (and God only knows how soon) to merge and swallow up the legislatures of the particular states—to fuse the 13 members of the foederal union into one mass—and that most probably by a mass of corruption."

The legislature in 1785 yielded to the Hamiltonians to the extent of authorizing the Congress to prohibit the export or import of merchandise in the vessels of any nation "not in the treaty" with the United States, but it again refused to allow the Congress to collect the impost. The commercial towns were now genuinely alarmed. The New York Chamber of Commerce and even the general committee of mechanics of that city petitioned the legislature or circularized the state. The merchants and public creditors appointed a remonstrance committee. Yet in the spring elections of 1785, the Federalists seem to have elected only three of the persons named for the Assembly to six by the Antifederalists. The state remained unrepentant in its isolation.

The Federalists met with still another defeat in the spring of 1786. Livingston introduced a bill which gave to the Congress complete control of the collection of impost duties. But Lansing's motion to substitute state for Federal collectors was carried by one vote in the Assembly, while the decision to keep collection in the hands of the state was confirmed by a much more decisive vote in the Senate. Since the other twelve states

had agreed to the unconditional impost grant, New York must again bear the responsibility for the failure of the plan.

Meanwhile, on March 14, 1786, the governor transmitted to his legislature certain congressional resolutions and a letter from the governor of Virginia proposing a meeting of the states to consider measures for the improvement of trade and navigation among the states. Seven weeks later the legislature named six men of decidedly Federalist tendencies to represent the state at Annapolis: Leonard Gansevoort, Alexander Hamilton, Robert C. Livingston, Robert R. Livingston, James Duane, and Egbert Benson. Of the six, Benson and Hamilton alone reached Annapolis to confer with the delegates of only four other states, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey. The decision for a general convention to revise the Articles of Confederation was by no means pleasing to the New York governor and his followers. They had expected the discussions to be confined to commercial matters. The legislature apparently shared the governor's qualms.

In August, 1786, after New York's failure to enact an unconditional impost grant, the Congress requested Clinton to call a special session to reconsider that action. The governor declined, pointing out that by the terms of the state constitution he was authorized to call special sessions only on "extraordinary occasions." Since conditions were the same as when the legislature decided to make a limited grant only, the governor did not believe that an "extraordinary occasion" existed. The Hamiltonians were incensed at what they termed the stubbornness of the governor, and pointed out that a special session would convene the new legislature which might be willing to repeal the Act of May 4, 1786, and to pass an unconditional impost grant. But subsequent events did not bear out the Hamiltonian contention.

When the new legislature convened early in 1787, Hamilton

took his seat in it as a delegate from New York, to continue his attack on the Antifederalism of the Clintonians and to persuade New York to take part in the revision of the Articles of Confederation. Hamilton and Gordon, of the committee to prepare an answer to the governor's message, framed a reply which, by ignoring them, condemned the governor's reasons for not calling a special session. This was too much for the Assembly, which amended the Hamilton-Gordon report by declaring its "approbation of your Excellency's conduct in not convening the Legislature at an earlier period," and by passing the amendment by the smashing majority of 39 to 9. Evidently this was another Clintonian Antifederal Assembly.

To make it even more certain that the legislature of 1787 intended to make no concessions to the Congress, the Assembly proceeded to weaken the perennial congressional impost-grant bill by making the collectors amenable to the state. It was in his argument for the unconditional impost grant that the irrepressible Hamilton made his famous and much reprinted speech on the subject of Federal powers. Schuyler thought this speech so powerful that New York's action in instructing its delegates in Congress to consent to the calling of the Philadelphia Convention might be attributed to it. It did not, however, prevent the defeat of the unconditional impost grant by the decisive vote 38 to 19. Hamilton must have been somewhat discouraged. His Federalist group in the Assembly included the ever-faithful New York and Richmond delegates, generally those from near-by Westchester, and usually some support from Albany and Long Island. The river counties, except Albany, and eastern Long Island gave the Antifederalists a large majority. It must have been especially provoking to the capable and fluent Hamiltonians, teeming with Federalist arguments, that the majority was so often of the silent steam-roller variety which said little or nothing in debate but voted "No."

Although the economic depression of the middle eighties was beginning to lift by 1787, there were other ill omens that strengthened the Federalist demand for a national constitutional convention. Militia had to be marched to the eastern boundary of the state to keep those disaffected by the Shays movement from making headway in New York. Bankruptcies continued. The British refused to evacuate the western posts which were so important to Albany's fur trade. And from abroad came news of the enforcement of British prohibitions upon American trade with the British West Indies.

Our government is unequal to the task assigned it [Jay wrote to John Adams early in 1787], and the people begin also to perceive its inefficiency. The Convention gains ground.

THE PHILADELPHIA CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

So strong was the sentiment in favor of a convention that many of the Clintonians in the Assembly joined with the Federalists in adopting instructions to the New York delegates in the Congress to move a recommendation to the thirteen states that a convention be called to revise the Articles of Confederation. The Senate concurred by a majority of one. The New York delegates in the Congress moved a resolution as instructed, but the resolution accepted by the Congress was one offered by the Massachusetts delegation. The convention was to meet at Philadelphia the second Monday in May, 1787.

The legislature, with its substantial Clintonian majority in the lower house, was too wary to send only Federalists to the Philadelphia Convention. Indeed it is probable that the choice of Hamilton as a delegate was made possible only through a compromise between the Antifederalist Assembly and the more conservative Senate that was inclined toward Federalism. Only two assemblymen, in addition to Hamilton himself, voted

against Hamilton's candidacy, and Robert Yates, who was known to be Antifederal in his views, was chosen unanimously. The only contest in the Assembly came in choosing between John Lansing and James Duane, both known to be partisans. Lansing won by 26 to 23, receiving the support of the delegates from counties which were ordinarily Clintonian. Duane received the support of New York, Albany and Richmond. The Senate not only concurred in the selection of Yates, Hamilton and Lansing, but for some unexplained reason frustrated Hamilton's attempt to convert the delegation into a Federalist one by adding two extra delegates who, Hamilton intended, were to be Federalists. Possibly the Senate was but living up to the terms of a compromise by which the Federalists were to have one representative in the delegation of three.

According to the resolution for appointing the New York delegation to the Convention, delegates were named "for the sole and express purpose of revising the Articles of Confederation, and reporting to Congress and the several legislatures such alterations and amendments therein, as shall, when agreed to in Congress, and confirmed by the several states under the federal constitution be adequate to the exigencies of the government, and preservation of the union." The Clintonians must have felt themselves reasonably secure. They had chosen an Antifederalist delegation to the convention and had confined its purpose, as far as New York was concerned, to the revision of the Articles of Confederation.

New York played no very significant part in the Philadelphia Convention, which sat nearly four months, from May 25 to September 17, 1787. Yates and Lansing, however, very soon found the meeting becoming much too ultra-Federal to suit them, and withdrew in protest on July 5, less than six weeks after the beginning of the session. The letter that the two disillusioned delegates addressed to Governor Clinton, explain-

ing their reasons for leaving the Convention, is one of the few clear, direct statements of the Antifederalist position that has come down to us. They left the Convention because: first, although it had been authorized only to revise the Articles of Confederation, the Convention had taken upon itself the writing of an entirely new constitution; secondly, they objected to the creation of a consolidated union, a national state, as being inconsistent with the constitution of the sovereign state of New York. They felt that a central government, the seat of which would be far removed from most centers of population, might turn tyrant and endanger the liberties of the people. They believed that no centralized government could operate effectively over such a great expanse of country. And they thought that it would prove to be very expensive to superimpose a new and elaborate governmental structure upon the state and local governments which already existed. In expressing these opinions, Yates and Lansing probably represented their state; and it is more than likely that a plebiscite of their constituents would have approved their action by a large majority.

Hamilton also was absent from many of the sessions of the Philadelphia Convention. He was present during the first weeks of the Convention, when he was consistently outvoted by Yates and Lansing, but during the later weeks showed his indifference to the milk-and-water character of the document that his colleagues were preparing by spending much of his time in New York. It was natural that Hamilton, with his close associations with men of prominence in the other states, his commercial background, his economic and financial principles and interests, his lack of provincialism, and his distrust of the administration of his own state, should have been the advocate of a strongly centralized national government. Distrusting the masses of men as he did, he leaned toward government by the few.

In the Convention, on June 18, he delivered a five-hour ora-

tion in which he outlined a plan of government, which was such as to give him the reputation of being a monarchist and a lover of aristocracy, a reputation that he never lived down. In this speech he proposed a plan which would subordinate the states to the central government by giving the state governors a veto over state legislation and making the governors the appointees of the President of the United States. His national legislature might be chosen directly by a broad electorate, but his president and senate were to be elected by property holders only and were to hold office for life upon good behavior. He admitted frankly that he believed the British government to be the best in existence, and he denounced the state governments, with their provincialism. They were, he declared, controlled by ambitious demagogues. Hamilton's plan met with the approval of many of his colleagues, but for obvious reasons it received no support. Its author, on his side, showed no enthusiasm at the time for the scheme of government evolved by the Convention. Yet he returned to Philadelphia at the end of the summer, signed the document as the lone delegate from New York, and became its whole-hearted advocate and its most effective supporter in New York State.

The Clintonians were not favorably impressed with the new Constitution. It gave what seemed to them tremendous powers to a government which might retire to its citadel, the Federal district, surround itself by its own army, and play the tyrant far removed from the restraining influences of the democratic citizenry to which it should have been more immediately responsible. The popular body of its legislature, the House of Representatives, was too small and the congressional districts in the states would consequently be much too large for adequate representation. Its powers of coercion were so great as to threaten the sovereignty of the states and it had no bill of rights—perhaps the most serious defect of all.

Since their opposition was not so much to specific articles in the document as to the basic principle of consolidation, the Clintonians could not see that such radical centralization was necessary. They were agriculturalists, and there is a great deal of evidence to show that even in the blackest months of the depression of the eighties the farmers were tolerably well off. Their farms were generally self-sufficient units far removed from the centers of commerce, where the depression was most acute. Taxes had been low, for the Clinton régime had been thrifty and economical. The tariff on imports, which the proposed Constitution would confiscate for the new central government, had provided an important source of state revenue, and its loss would necessitate other taxes which might bear heavily upon the farmers. Furthermore, the state had not become seriously infected with the craze for paper money; as yet the farmers had been satisfied by the moderate emissions of paper which the governor and the legislature had approved. The Clinton régime, which the Hamiltonians considered objectionably and radically democratic, had shown itself to be remarkably sane and surprisingly conservative, not only in its paper-money measures, but in its relief of debtors and in its prompt measures for the suppression of Shays sympathizers in the northeastern counties. All in all, the New York of the eighties had been one of the best governed of the thirteen states. And now that prices were rising, commerce indubitably looking up and the depression generally beginning to lift, the farmers saw less reason than ever for submitting to new and distant masters.

The Philadelphia Convention sent the finished Constitution to the Congress, where New York was represented by a delegation that was, except for Judge Benson, entirely Antifederalist in sentiment. When the Congress began to discuss what action should be taken with regard to the document, Melancton Smith of New York objected strenuously to approving it without a

bill of rights. The Congress took no steps towards supplying the omission, and on September 27 New York joined with Virginia in voting against the proposal to transmit the Constitution to the states, with the suggestion that it be submitted for approval to state conventions called for the purpose. The advocates of the Constitution then agreed upon its submission to the states without any recommendation, and the motion was carried unanimously. The New York Antifederalists had made the first of a long series of concessions, which were to end in what none of them desired – the adoption of the Federal Constitution.

THE CONVENTION FOR RATIFICATION DELAYED

Before the New York Convention to consider the ratification of the Constitution met at Poughkeepsie in June, 1788, eight states had already ratified, and two more were to ratify before New York made up its mind. The reason why New York State delayed its decision so long is not altogether clear. The legislature which finally, on February 1, 1788, decided to call a state convention was only slightly more Federal in its sympathies than the legislature of 1787 which had so resolutely turned down the Federal impost plan. This meant that both governor and legislature were decidedly cool toward the Constitution. And the governor, as a shrewd politician who knew his state thoroughly, might have foreseen that any convention chosen by the electorate in the late winter of 1787–88 would be strongly Antifederal. Why did not the governor and the legislature dispose of the whole business at once and reject the new Federal system? Instead, the governor hesitated. He refused to call a special session in the fall of 1787. “The Governor of New-York is very active against it,” a Massachusetts paper declared in December, “and will not call the Assembly.” The Clintonians evidently favored delay.

Apparently there were two principal reasons for this policy of delay. First, the governor was not, as a matter of fact, certain that the citizenry would choose an Antifederalist convention. General Knox in December wrote to Washington that New York was evenly divided in sentiment. The *Massachusetts Centinel*, late in January, 1788, reported that New York favored the Constitution by two to one. And General Samuel B. Webb, a New Yorker and a keen observer of political trends, believed in April just before the elections that the Federalists had "flattering prospects."

The second reason for delay was that the governor could not count upon the support of a united party. A few weeks before the convention met, John Jay wrote that, while the opposition leaders wished to reject the Constitution without more ado, the rank and file of the party hesitated, fearing that rejection might cause disunion. Some of the opposition, the young Federalist, James Kent, wrote in June, "have said that they will not vote against it." Many of the Antifederalists, while cool toward the Constitution, were afraid that rejection might cause the commercial southern counties to secede from the up-state counties. They therefore preferred ratification with amendments, or with a bill of rights, to downright rejection.

The governor's plan was to delay action in the hope that some of the less Federalist states would reject the Constitution, which required the approval of nine states, and so make the calling of a New York convention unnecessary. The extremists within the governor's party would probably have preferred to delay indefinitely, even though nine states ratified, leaving New York out of the Union by default. But the moderates were too strong, and Schoonmaker's motion to censure the Philadelphia Convention by attaching a preamble to the resolution for calling a state convention, which would call attention to the fact that the Federal Convention had exceeded its powers, was lost

by two votes. The resolution of February 1 provided that elections for a state convention should be held for not over five days commencing the third Tuesday in April, that each county should be represented by as many delegates as it had representatives in the Assembly, and, most interesting of all, that the delegates should be chosen at the polls by all free male citizens of twenty-one or over.

New York was the only one of the thirteen states which elected its convention by universal male suffrage—in a day when such liberalism was virtually unknown. In adopting its own constitution in 1777, it did not submit it to popular ratification of any kind, in spite of the demand of the mechanics and the ultra-democrats of the day that all citizens should be allowed an opportunity to approve or disapprove. In 1788 there was apparently no agitation in favor of universal male suffrage and there was little comment upon the action of the legislature in granting it. It is likely that the Clintonians, controlling the legislature, extended the franchise in the hope that the little farmer and the propertyless city worker would flock to the polls to vote for Antifederal candidates. If so, they were disappointed. The provision did, indeed, increase the number of votes cast for delegates to the convention to about a third more than the number cast for members of the Assembly, but the proportion of gain realized by the two parties was very nearly equal. The effect of the universal male franchise provision upon the selection of delegates was very nearly negligible.

Could the Clintonians, in 1788, have foreseen the returns of the Federal census of 1790, they might have been less ready to base representation in the convention upon representation in the Assembly. For the census of 1790 was to indicate that the river counties, which were strongly Clintonian, contained 69 per cent of the electorate, although they had only 57 per cent of the voting power in the Assembly. Consequently the Clintonian coun-

ties were considerably underrepresented in the Convention of 1788. Possibly this discrepancy changed the course of history.

The campaign that preceded the April elections was much the most fiercely waged in the history of the state up to that time. That part of the population which was politically-minded discussed every clause of the Constitution for weeks before the polls were opened. The newspapers were almost monopolized by the numerous controversial letters which they were called upon to print, condemning or advocating the Constitution. All of the old pen names of the last generation were revived, and the letters were signed, never with the honest name of the writer, but by "Brutus," "Aristides," "Rough Hewer," "Caesar," "Old Whig," "Publius," "Cincinnatus," and a hundred others.

Governor Clinton's own contribution to this battle of ink was a series of letters signed "Cato," the first of which appeared on September 27, 1787, simultaneously with the first publication in the state of the text of the Constitution. It was a heavy, but well-reasoned, pedantic effusion, which criticized the work of the Philadelphia Convention. Hamilton at once entered the arena and three days later the first of his "Caesar" letters appeared, bitter, denunciatory, and threatening violence to those who failed to see the truth as the Convention delegates at Philadelphia had seen it. But the Federalists realized that such philippics would only antagonize the moderate Clintonians whom they must win over. They therefore resolved upon a lengthy and systematic exposition of the Federalist point of view, which would dispense with personalities and appeal to reason. The new series of letters, to be written by Hamilton, Jay and Madison, was first signed "A Citizen of New York" and then, in order to encourage its use in other states, "Publius." It was this series that was collected and published in book form as the *Federalist*, which was distributed throughout the Union and printed by almost every newspaper in New York State. It

was much more widely read than any other tract of the time and presumably carried considerable weight in spite of the fact that it was too scholarly to reach many of those whose votes were most needed. It took more than printed arguments to bring New York to ratify the Constitution.

After "Publius," the most influential tract of New York authorship was John Jay's *Address to the People of New York*. The most widely read letters by a citizen of another state were Richard Henry Lee's *Letters of the Federal Farmer*, which the New York Antifederalists adopted as campaign literature. Gerry's *Columbian Patriot* and Pinckney's *Observations on the Plan of Government* were also much read. In contrast to the years of protest before the Revolution, the newspaper played a much more important part in 1788, and the broadside and pamphlet were relatively unimportant.

The ink-and-paper campaign dealt very largely with constitutional arguments supported by homely analogies and labored allusions to classic Old-World political thinkers like Locke and Montesquieu. But it also brought out the fact that men were not dealing in abstract principles of government and vacuous political theorizings—they were thinking, if not always writing, in terms of the concrete social and economic conditions in which they found themselves. Both parties to the struggle over the Constitution, for instance, were class-conscious. But the Antifederalists made no effort to conceal the fact that they were "the common people," "the yeomanry," the champions of the humbler classes, "none of the well-born few!" The Clintonian press declared that "the liberty, property, and every social comfort in the life of the yeomanry in America, are to be sacrificed at the altar of tyranny; . . . the aggrandisement of a few over the many." The governor's nephew, De Witt Clinton, summed up the Antifederalist position when he wrote his uncle at about the time of the election of delegates to the Convention: "From

the insolence of great men, from the tyranny of the rich—from the unfeeling rapacity of the excise-man and Tax-gatherer—from the misery of despotism—from the expense of supporting standing armies, navies, placemen, sinecures, federal cities, Senators, Presidents and a long train of et ceteras Good Lord deliver us." Abraham G. Lansing called the Federalists "the high prerogative Gentlemen." The Clintonian leaders were especially fearful that the powerful Federalist landlords would compel their tenants to support them. "The Baneful Manor Interest," wrote A. G. Lansing, "will be exerted to obtain Instructions to the Delegates, and the poor deluded well meaning Yeomanry of our Country, not having it in their power to follow the dictates of their own Consciences will be compelled to sign these Instructions to keep well with their Masters." The menace of the controlled vote employed against him was constantly present in the apprehension of the independent farmer.

On the other hand, the Federalists were, for obvious reasons, not so frank. They might in their letters to the press deplore the emphasis of the times on "liberty," or assert that the condition of the security market had brought "the great body of the people to wish for a Government administered by the better sort of people," but it was only in their private correspondence that they declared their conviction, as Jay did in a letter to Washington, that the "mass of men are neither wise nor good." The Federalists' advocacy of a strong central authority which would patronize commerce, suppress such agitation by the debtor classes as the Shays movement, provide a sound currency for the benefit of creditors and traders, protect the interests of the speculators in western lands, and strengthen the security market, would win but few votes in the rural counties. Consequently the Federalists confined themselves largely to legalistic arguments. In these the professional skill of their distinguished lawyers gave them advantage.

PARTIES, DELEGATES, AND DEBATES

The result of the election was an emphatic victory for the Clintonians. They carried nine counties out of thirteen and so won 46 of 65 seats in the convention, leaving the Hamiltonians with only 19 seats and four counties, New York with its nearest neighbors Richmond, Kings and Westchester. Albany, so often faithful to the Federalist leadership of New York City, had broken away to oppose ratification. The Albany County tenant farmers had gone to the polls to vote against their Federalist landlords and the commercial elements in the city of Albany—and their victory was the most surprising single result of the election. Queens and Suffolk Counties on Long Island, which were unstable in their politics, now joined the agricultural bloc by selecting Antifederal delegations. In vacillating Westchester, where the land system was less unpopular than in Albany and Dutchess, the tenant farmers followed their betters to the polls and voted for the Constitution. Dutchess went Clintonian, in company with Ulster and Orange, which were invariably opposed to Hamiltonian measures. It was a sweeping victory for the Antifederalists. Clearly the rank and file of the electorate of New York had little use for the Federal Constitution.

The delegates to the Poughkeepsie Convention included nearly all of the great political figures of the state. General Lamb was absent, but was busily at work distributing Antifederalist literature from the customhouse, which was the headquarters for the “federal republican” or Antifederalist organization. Philip and Peter Schuyler, Abraham Ten Broeck, Egbert Benson and Marinus Willett were perhaps the most important of the other absentees.

The Antifederalist delegation at Poughkeepsie included the most capable men in the party. Governor Clinton and his brother, James Clinton, were among the Ulster delegates. The

wealthy landowner, John Williams, came from northern New York. Queens sent Samuel Jones, Dutchess Melancton Smith, and Albany the two veterans of the Philadelphia Convention, Yates and Lansing. It was an able, substantial delegation, but it was not brilliant and, unfortunately for its own success, it was not eloquent.

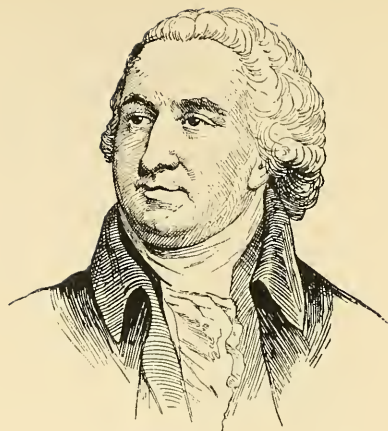
The Federalist delegation from New York County alone had more brilliance and eloquence than the entire Antifederalist group; it included James Duane, Alexander Hamilton, Richard Harison, John Sloss Hobart, John Jay, Robert R. Livingston, Nicholas Low, Richard Morris and Isaac Roosevelt—every name a distinguished one. These were the men who were to take advantage of every concession made by the enemy, and who were finally to force ratification upon a convention which, when it met, had not the slightest intention of taking such action.

The metropolis of the state recognized the importance of the occasion when on June 14, 1788, it turned out *en masse* to salute its delegates to the convention with cheers and the discharge of cannon as they left by boat for Poughkeepsie. According to Abraham Yates, Jr., this was a ceremony that the governor and his friends, leaving earlier in the day, "would not consent to." The convention met for organization in the courthouse at Poughkeepsie on Tuesday, June 17, chose Governor Clinton president, and named a committee on rules which contained an Antifederalist majority.

Many of the Clintonians still regretted the calling of the convention, and hoped for some delay or subterfuge that would make it unnecessary to accept or reject the Constitution. They talked, during much of the session, of adjournment in order to get the sentiment of their constituents. They were a party which did not know its own mind, which had no positive program even of opposition, and which veered away from any positive action. The general situation had become critical for them



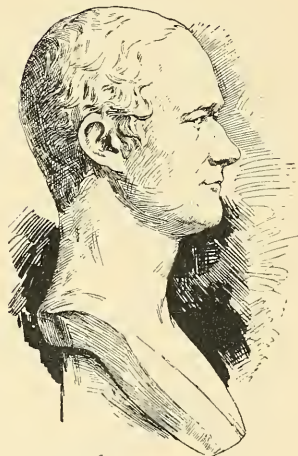
John Jay



John Adams



Alexander Hamilton



James Madison

FOUR CHAMPIONS OF THE
FEDERAL CONSTITUTION

by the ratification of the Constitution by the eighth state. Only nine ratifications were necessary, and conventions in both New Hampshire and Virginia were debating when the New York convention met. Jay was correct when he wrote, during the first days of the convention, that

the greater number [of the Clintonians] are, I believe, averse to a vote of rejection. Some would be content with recommendatory amendments; others wish for explanatory ones to settle constructions which they think doubtful; others would not be satisfied with less than absolute and previous amendments; and I am mistaken if there be not a few who prefer a separation from the Union to any national government whatever.

The Antifederalists were seriously divided among themselves. The Federalists were one in advocating immediate and unconditional ratification.

Because the burden of the proof fell upon the Federalists and because their program was a definite one, they took the initiative in the debate. Hamilton and Robert R. Livingston spoke often, ably, and perhaps at too great length. Jay, Duane, Hobart and Harison were frequently on their feet. On the Antifederalist side, Melancton Smith and John Lansing were perhaps the most capable debaters, and were supported by the lesser leaders, Jones, Williams and Bay.

Melancton Smith [wrote James Kent] was . . . the most prominent and the most responsible speaker on the Anti-Federal side of the Convention. There was no person to be compared to him in his powers of acute and logical discussion. He was Hamilton's most persevering and formidable antagonist . . . a man of remarkable simplicity, and of the most gentle, liberal, and amiable disposition.

The governor's few words and carefully studied arguments carried weight, but his influence was personal rather than oratorical. The other Clintonians seldom spoke at length. The burden

of the debate fell upon relatively few men on either side, but the Hamiltonians' superiority in debate was marked. Hamilton was clearly the Federalist leader as well as the most able debater on the floor.

Chancellor Livingston, in his opening address, offered the useful suggestion that the entire Constitution be discussed, clause by clause, before putting any part of it to a vote. This proposal was accepted, for neither side was, as we have seen, eager to force the issue. Only a few of the Antifederalist irreconcilables and Clintonian farmers, anxious about their crops, were ready for an immediate decision. The period of grace proved to be about three weeks.

The debates in the convention added but little to what had already been said and written about the Constitution during the nine months since the adjournment of the Philadelphia Convention. Both sides were justly accused of retailing arguments that had already appeared in the press. It is probable that much of the real work of persuasion and discussion took place outside of the courthouse. At any rate there were other factors which had much more to do with the final decision of the convention than the tedious and repetitious debates themselves. The extreme Clintonians might talk bravely of rejection, even at the cost of remaining out of the Union, but for many reasons New York did not dare take such a bold step. Consequently the action of the other states in ratifying or refusing to ratify was all-important to the statesmen at Poughkeepsie.

Massachusetts, one of the most important of the doubtful states, had given the hopeful Federalists of New York City cause for a general celebration by ratifying in February. But the margin of victory had been very narrow and the edge had been removed from this Bay State victory by the recommendation of amendments by the Massachusetts convention. New Hampshire's convention had balked, and adjourned to meet

again in June. But Maryland ratified in April and South Carolina in May. Thus, as we have said, only one more ratification was needed to provide the nine required for putting the Constitution into operation. The New Hampshire convention provided the all-important ninth accession and, when the news of its ratification arrived at Poughkeepsie only a week after the organization of the New York convention, the entire aspect of things changed. It gave to the Hamiltonians a tremendous practical advantage. And on July 1 came news of the ratification by a state that was much more important to the new Union, Virginia. Contemporaries fully realized the importance of these accessions. Schuyler had written, on June 24, to Henry Van Schaack, "Should Virginia reject, I fear the Anties [of New York] will follow their example." It was Madison's opinion that New York "must go with the Eastern States, let the direction be what it may."

The Clintonians had put their trust in Virginia. Apparently they had talked of letting the nine adventurous states which had first ratified put the Constitution into operation, while the others, or at least New York with Virginia and North Carolina, formed a confederation more agreeable to their taste. This confederation plan was definite enough to receive attention on the floor of the Poughkeepsie Convention, when Chancellor Livingston attacked it in a speech on June 25. It is impossible to say how seriously it was considered by the Clintonians.

It was perhaps the Federalist control of the mails that thwarted the attempts of the Antifederalists of New York and Virginia to work together to prevent ratification. Most of the postmasters of the day were Federalist in their sympathies, and it is significant that Antifederalist editors like Powars of Boston, Oswald of Philadelphia, and Greenleaf of New York, were complaining during the early months of 1788 that political articles were cut out of their papers or that the papers themselves

disappeared in the mails. The Federalists of Pennsylvania took steps to keep the address of the Antifederalist minority of its constitutional convention out of the mails. And John Lamb, New York Antifederalist, learned that Richard Henry Lee, Virginian of similar sentiments, had not received his letter of May 10 until June 27, two days after the Virginia Convention had ratified! Lee told Lamb that had the letter arrived in time it might have made it possible for the two states to act together in securing a number of desirable amendments to the Constitution.

More important in this connection was the delay of Governor Randolph's letter of December 27, 1787, to Governor Clinton, in which Randolph informed Clinton of an appropriation of £8,000 made by the Virginia legislature for correspondence between Virginia and other states regarding their attitude toward the constitution. The Virginia Antifederalists were interested in the project. Yet Randolph's letter of December 27 reached Clinton only on March 7, too late for action by the New York legislature. Even then there might have been time for conferring, but Randolph was becoming a convert to Federalist persuasion. Governor Clinton's letter to Governor Randolph written on May 8, in which Clinton urged coöperation, possibly with a view to securing satisfactory amendments to the Constitution, was held up by the Virginian and sent to the Virginia legislature only two days before Virginia ratified and at a time when there was no quorum to act upon it. In view of the fact that Virginia leaders, including George Mason and Patrick Henry, had been corresponding with New York Antifederalists in an effort to get the two states to agree upon conditional amendments, the delay and waylaying of correspondence between the two was of considerable importance. As it was, Virginia ratified on the twenty-fifth of June by a very narrow margin.

UNCONDITIONAL RATIFICATION

On the other hand, the Federalists of the several states co-operated with considerable success. Hamilton and Madison, for instance, kept constantly in touch with each other during the critical weeks. And realizing the great importance of getting news of the happy events at the first possible moment, the Hamiltonians arranged that news of ratification by New Hampshire or Virginia should be forwarded by express messengers. Consequently the New Hampshire decision was known in Poughkeepsie only three days after the event, and the action of the Virginia Convention only six days after. On both occasions, Federalist New York City, sensing victory, celebrated with barbecues, processions and demonstrations. Major L'Enfant was the director of the all-day procession which greeted the accession of New Hampshire, the ninth state, possibly the most remarkable pageant in the history of the city. Among the many floats representing various crafts and industries was one which strikingly illustrated the city's interest in the new government and its chief advocate; mounted on sturdy wheels was the ship of state, fitted out with guns to fire complimentary salutes, with its base bearing in large letters the name of Hamilton.

Governor Clinton might insist that ratification by nine states in no way changed the situation in New York and the more loyal of his followers might echo his sentiments, but it was as a matter of fact as clear to them as it is now to the historian that the battle was lost. Before June 24, when the news arrived, the Clintonians had presented what appeared to be a united front. The Federalists were hopeful, but no more. The news of the twenty-fourth took the heart out of the Clintonians. It divided the party and so made ratification inevitable. It still remained to be decided whether that ratification should be un-

conditional or with conditional amendments, but the Hamiltonians had won at least half of their battle through events over which New York had had no control.

After Virginia's ratification, the change in the situation was apparent even to the most faithful Clintonians. Just before this event, Abraham G. Lansing had admitted, in discussing New Hampshire's action, that "Virginia will have a more serious effect I fear upon the Spirits and determination of our Friends." "After the adoption by Virginia," George Mason wrote a few weeks later, "[the people of New York] thought themselves under the necessity of adopting also, for fear of being left out of the Union, and of civil commotions." Within a week of the arrival of the news from Virginia, the moderate Clintonians in what might be called a party caucus overruled their irreconcilable colleagues and decided upon ratification with conditional amendments.

There were two primary reasons why these men, who had no love for the Constitution, now felt themselves compelled to vote for ratification. In the first place they feared that, outside of the Union, New York would lose much of its lucrative trade, and might well become the victim of commercial discriminations by its neighbors. New York, as we have seen, was the entrepôt for much of the commerce of New Jersey and of Connecticut. The state had long levied tribute upon this trade, thus incurring considerable resentment from the neighbor states which had from time to time retaliated. If outside of the Union, New York might lose the trade which kept her ports prosperous, which supplied her with hard money, and which had to that time yielded a substantial revenue in the customs duties.

In the second place, the Clintonians had reason to fear that New York State itself might have to face disunion and secession in case the Constitution should be rejected. The newspapers of

the period contained numerous allusions to the possibility of the secession of the southern Federalist counties in case of rejection. For instance the *New York Packet*, on May 13, printed a letter which stated that rather than be left out of the Union, Staten Island would unite with New Jersey; and a month later a Pennsylvania newspaper warned the Poughkeepsie Convention that if New York should reject, not only would Staten Island join New Jersey, but New York City and Long Island would unite with Connecticut.

An idea has taken air that the southern part of the State [wrote Jay late in May] will at all events, adhere to the Union; and, if necessary to that end, seek a separation from the northern. This idea has influence on the fears of the northern.

As late as July 6, Gen. Samuel B. Webb wrote to his fiancée that if the Constitution should be rejected "'tis more than probable there will be a separation of the State." Northern New York could scarcely afford to be bottled up and shut off from the sea. Nor would it look with equanimity upon the loss of the affluent southern counties, which bore the major share of the tax burden of the state.

Convinced of the inevitability of ratification, the Clintonians released a storm of proposals for amendments. John Lansing, for instance, offered on July 7 his very interesting bill of rights—interesting because so much of it bore a striking resemblance to the later Federal bill of rights embodied in the first ten amendments. A committee was appointed to consider the several amendments offered to the convention, and to select and to suggest. Apparently the Federalist minority on the committee was able to prevent it from arriving at any decision. The Federalist group objected to Lansing's plan for ratification with some conditional and some recommendatory amendments, and the antis refused to consider Jay's proposal for ratification with

recommendatory amendments only. The two groups were drawing closer together, but they were far from agreement.

On July 15, Melancton Smith proposed to amend Jay's motion for ratification in such a way as to make the amendments conditional. Hamilton and Duane offered counter proposals but, seeing no prospect of immediate success, the Federalists proposed adjournment in order to appeal to their constituents. This the more vigorous Clintonians resolutely opposed, fearing that the landlords would use all their influence to coerce the rural voters into instructing their delegates to accept unconditional ratification. Clinton himself was ready for the final decision, and the motion for postponement was defeated by 40 votes to 22.

Hamilton, in despair of winning a complete victory, wrote to Madison, then in New York, to ask whether in his opinion the state could be received into the Union while reserving the right to secede in case the desired amendments were not adopted by the new government, a proposal which had come from Melancton Smith. Madison objected strenuously, and the plan was abandoned.

But the delegates were growing tired of discussion. Farms at home needed attention. And there was danger that New York would lose the honor of becoming the first capital of the new Union should it delay ratification any longer.

The all-important decision came on July 23. The Antifederalist, Samuel Jones, whose health had for several days kept him conveniently out of the discussions, had recovered sufficiently by the twenty-third to move that the two words "on condition" in the motion to ratify the constitution be changed to "in full confidence." Melancton Smith expressed his approval and the committee of the whole house passed the Jones amendment by a vote of 31 to 29. The battle was virtually decided. Ratification was to be unconditional.

The die-hards made one more attack, on the twenty-fourth, but John Lansing's resolution, calling for ratification upon the condition that New York would leave the Union if a second Federal convention should not be called, was defeated with the aid of the votes of twelve delegates who had been elected as Antifederalists. A long list of recommended amendments was drawn up, a circular letter to the states advocating a second Federal convention to formulate amendments was adopted, and on Saturday, July 26, the convention made the final decision to ratify unconditionally by the narrow margin of 3 votes in a total of 57.

It is significant that in the final vote the river counties of Albany, Columbia, Montgomery, Orange (three of the four delegates) and Ulster, as well as up-state Washington and Clinton Counties remained staunch in their opposition. The 30 votes in favor of ratification included not only those of the delegates from New York, Westchester, Kings and Richmond, but also those of the four delegates from Queens, three of the four from Suffolk, four of the six from Dutchess where the commercial town of Poughkeepsie was located, and one from Orange, that of Jesse Woodhull who was a man of some property. Clearly it was a victory for commercial New York City and its allies over the rural democrats of the river counties. The Antifederalists accepted their defeat, and the Federal Constitution itself never again became an issue.

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WASHINGTON'S INAUGURATION IN
THE FIRST FEDERAL CAPITAL

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from Ocean to Source"*



WASHINGTON'S INAUGURATION IN THE FIRST FEDERAL CAPITAL *

WASHINGTON IN NEW YORK DURING THE REVOLUTION

NEXT to his native state, Virginia, and Pennsylvania, George Washington's relations with New York were more continuous and more important than with any other state. This connection began in his young manhood and continued until his death, and here occurred some of the most significant events in his life.

Washington's first contact with New York was in December, 1753, when at the age of twenty, in taking a message from the governor of Virginia to the French commander at Fort Le Boeuf, he crossed territory vaguely claimed by this province. The earliest appearance of his name in New York records was on January 29, 1754, when Lieutenant Governor de Lancey read to his Council a letter about that journey from Governor Dinwiddie of Virginia. While Sir William Johnson criticised his youthful contemporary for his lack of "prudence and circumspection" in surrendering Fort Necessity to the French, the more sympathetic New York Assembly voted £5,000 to further military operations against the French, and de Lancey sent to England a report of the "defeat near the Ohio."

Friendship and public business prompted Washington's first visit to New York on February 15, 1756, when he spent five days in the metropolis as a guest of his boyhood friend, Beverly Robinson, a Virginian, who had married Susanna Philipse and lived in New York City. In a round of gaieties he met the social, military and political leaders, most of whom were loyalists in the Revolution, and was attracted by the charm of Mary Philipse, sister of Susanna. He recorded the expenditure of £2 12s. in

* That part of this chapter which deals with Washington's relations to New York has been furnished by the Editor.

"treating Ladies to ye Microcosm"—an exhibition of the motion of "The World in Miniature" produced by a mechanism with 1,200 wheels. On a trip to and from Boston by way of Greenport, he traveled the length of Long Island twice. Because of the purchase in New York of fine clothes, slippers and two mares, together with losses at cards, he had to borrow from his host £91 7s. 6d. to get home.

Washington's second visit to New York was in 1773, to put his stepson in King's College and to attend a dinner in honor of Gen. Thomas Gage. He called on old friends and dined with James de Lancey and Major Bayard. This time he lodged with Samuel Farmer, spent several evenings at Hull's tavern and one afternoon "went to the play."

The next year, in the Continental Congress, Washington met a new group of New Yorkers—the leaders of the Revolutionary party with whom he was to have intimate relations for the remainder of his life. He served with them on committees to initiate the earliest war measures of Congress. As commander in chief, on his way to Boston he was given a popular ovation on his third visit to New York City.

After forcing the British to evacuate Boston with the aid of cannon from Ticonderoga, Washington returned to New York on April 14, 1775, to remain almost continuously for seven trying months to defend the metropolis. There the Declaration of Independence was read to his troops; loyalist activities and a plot against his life were frustrated; and around the city were fought those engagements which have been described elsewhere. From the end of 1776 to the summer of 1778, he was absent from New York, trusting Gen. Philip Schuyler to frustrate the Burgoyne campaign and Gen. George Clinton to defend the Hudson River. Returning to New York on July 15, 1778, Washington busied himself for five months in thwarting a British ascent of the river as he traveled up and down both sides of

the Hudson from the enemy's lines to West Point, and in planning the safety of the frontier settlements.

The winter of 1778-79 was spent in winter quarters in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, where the climate was milder, but by June of 1779 Washington was again in New York. Meanwhile the Sullivan-Clinton campaign was launched, Stony Point was captured, and plans were made to retake New York City—a project maturing for the next two years—before he left on November 30 for winter quarters to the southward. By July 30, 1780, he was once more in New York to remain almost continuously until the latter part of August, 1781. During this period was discovered Arnold's treason, which new historic sources show to have begun as early as 1778, and André's execution. Details for the recapture of the metropolis were worked out in conference with the French commander, whose army by July had reached the vicinity of New York. Then, deceiving Sir Henry Clinton, who was daily expecting an attack and hence refused to send relief to Cornwallis, Washington in a masterly movement hurried the American and French armies southward to Yorktown to coöperate with the French fleet in forcing the surrender of Cornwallis on October 19, 1781, thus virtually ending the war. About four months later Washington took up his headquarters at Newburgh, where he remained until peace was signed and the British evacuated New York City in 1783.

A CROWN REFUSED AND A REVOLT SUPPRESSED

The army which had made independence a reality on the battlefield remained unpaid and neglected both by Congress and by the people whom they had delivered. This negligence produced discontent and ominous murmurs. The military leaders, questioning the efficiency of the republican government, discussed the advisability of establishing a more effective system

while they still had weapons in their hands. As a result, Col. Lewis Nicola was selected to make their wishes known to Washington. In a letter which reviewed the financial disorders and the weakness of the confederacy, he was invited to assume the office of king, with the backing of the army. He might have had a royal title by an approving wave of his hand—even silence might have been interpreted as assent. And the people would have supported such an establishment, for a monarchy was more easily visualized than a successful constitutional republic. But Washington envisioned a people freed from Old-World tyrannies, with an opportunity to fashion their own political institutions. As a practical idealist, he spurned the offer of a crown. His reply on May 22, 1782, was epoch-making in American history.

Astonished at the suggestion and pained to learn of the monarchist sentiment in the army, he severely reprehended the communication and wondered what part of his conduct had encouraged it. He begged his soldiers, as they loved their country or respected him, never again to make such a proposal. But his refusal of a kingship did not allay the rebellious spirit. Six months later he expressed to the secretary of war his alarm at the growing insurrection in the army, which was without money or credit. If disbanded while "soured by penury," a storm of revolt might break out. To Hamilton he confided his fear of "civil commotions."

The agitation for a counter-revolution came to a head in the spring of 1783, when Maj. John Armstrong wrote the first of the unsigned "Newburgh Addresses," calling a meeting of the officers and inciting the army to assume control of the government before peace was made.

Can you then consent to be the only sufferers by this Revolution, and, retiring from the field, grow old in poverty, wretchedness, and contempt? . . . If you can—go; and carry with you the jest of Tories

and the scorn of Whigs. . . . Go—starve and be forgotten. But if your spirit should revolt at this . . . tyranny under whatever garb it may assume, whether it be the plain coat of republicanism or the splendid robe of royalty . . . attend to your situation and redress yourselves. If the present moment be lost . . . your threats will be as empty as your entreaties now.

A second address changed the date of the meeting to March 15, 1783. This wave of revolt spreading through the army tested Washington's patience and wisdom to the limit. By conferring with his desperate officers separately, he quieted the agitation. When the officers convened in the newly-built Temple, he dominated the assembly. Apologizing for his presence, he took from his coat pocket a carefully prepared address and from his waistcoat a pair of steel-rimmed spectacles, remarking: "You have perceived long since, gentlemen, that I have grown gray in the service of my country; and now I have grown blind." After denouncing the anonymous addresses, he condemned the measures advocated therein as both impracticable and traitorous. At the same time, the intentions of Congress were commended, the officers were urged to accept them as sincere and to turn their backs on those who sought "to open the floodgates of civil discord." When Washington left the hall, it was apparent that he had won one of the greatest battles of the Revolution, not by the sword, but by his good sense, his kindly heart and his plea for justice.

An order for the cessation of hostilities was issued by Washington on April 19, 1783, which was followed on June 8 by the famous circular letter to the governors recommending the disbandment of the army, asking the various states to subdue their antipathies, and urging them to create a strong Union. Few of the great commander's writings have remained to us which reveal more clearly and eloquently his high political ideals. Temple Hill remains an honored shrine of American patriotism.

VISITS TO NORTHERN AND WESTERN NEW YORK

Washington had hoped for several years to find time to accept Schuyler's repeated invitation to visit him at Albany. On June 24, 1782, he wrote Rochambeau,

I am . . . setting out for Albany on a visit to my posts. . . . My stay will not exceed eight or ten days.

Accompanied by Governor Clinton, he was welcomed at Albany on his first visit with an address by the mayor and the city fathers, and presented with a document, in a gold box, conferring upon him the freedom of the city. At 6 P.M. the church bells were rung. At sunset thirteen guns were discharged, and at nightfall illuminations honored "The Guardian and Savior of his country." The next day he received an address from the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church and was entertained by Schuyler.

Accompanied by Clinton, Schuyler and "many other gentlemen of distinction," and escorted by General Gansevoort with forty volunteer horsemen, he visited the Saratoga battlefield and the scene of Burgoyne's surrender. The following day, he rode to Schenectady. Five miles outside the city, sixty citizens on horseback met him, and at the gate he was welcomed by a hundred Oneidas and Tuscaroras in full war paint. Bells pealed and cannon boomed as he was dined by the magistrates, military officers and citizens. After inspecting the town and fortifications, he returned to Albany and descended the river to Newburgh. This tour cost him £82 8s. od.

For years Washington had wished to take a trip through northern and western New York and the "irksome interval" during the summer of 1783 seemed an opportune time. He informed Schuyler at Saratoga that he was leaving to visit the northern battlefields, posts and forts — "theaters of important

military transactions" – and asked him to arrange for boats at Lake George. To the president of Congress he wrote, "I have resolved to wear away a little time in performing a tour to the northward as far as Ticonderoga and Crown Point, and perhaps as far up the Mohawk River as Fort Schuyler." He expected "to be gone about two weeks," and ordered that important papers should follow him.

Leaving Mrs. Washington at Newburgh, he set out with Governor Clinton on July 10, 1783, by barge for Albany. Once more the Albanians welcomed him and he journeyed northward by horse to Saratoga, Fort Edward and Lake George. By boat he visited Fort Ticonderoga and Crown Point. The course of his return journey is not quite clear; presumably he followed the upward route. Isaac Weld, Jr., an English traveler, in his *Travels through the States of North America*, published in 1800, stated: "General Washington told me, that he never was so much annoyed by mosquitoes in any part of America as in Skenesborough, for that they used to bite through the thickest boot." This statement, and a local tradition that Washington visited Cambridge and the Bennington battlefield, have led to the assertion that he returned by that route, but his expense account and the lack of documentary evidence make the claim doubtful. On his return, he passed through Saratoga Springs and Ballston to Schenectady. From the latter place he went up the Mohawk Valley to Fort Stanwix, Wood Creek and "vicinity." On the way back he passed through Fort Herkimer and Fort Plain; thence to Lake Otsego, Cherry Valley and on to Canajoharie and back to Schenectady. From the latter place, he rode to Duanesburg to visit Gen. William North and his guest, General von Steuben. From Albany he returned to Newburgh.

Congress requesting his attendance "after his return from the northward," he reported to the president that his tour had been carried out with such rapidity that his horses were "much

fatigued." Later he said that one of his objects was to facilitate the occupation of frontier posts after their evacuation by British troops. Indeed, at Fort Rensselaer he engaged Col. Thomas Casaty to study the situation at Detroit, and arranged to have stores sent up the Mohawk to Fort Herkimer. He was also deeply impressed with the possibilities of an inland navigation system to develop the "new empire."

One of the results of this journey was that Washington became interested in speculation in land in New York State. With Governor Clinton as a partner, he thought of purchasing a tract including "the mineral spring at Saratoga" and another tract on which Fort Schuyler was located. Disappointed in obtaining these areas, he and Clinton bought 6,000 acres in Oneida County adjoining the Fort Schuyler tract, for £1,800. For this investment he borrowed money of Clinton. He sold two-thirds of his share in 1793 for a net gain of £1,500, and the remainder was valued at \$6,000 at the time of his death. As a property owner, a taxpayer, a freeman of Albany and of New York City, and as a resident, George Washington met the requirements for a citizen and a voter of New York State.

THE SELECTION OF NEW YORK CITY AS THE FIRST FEDERAL CAPITAL

The establishment of the seat of the newly-formed government of the American Union, in New York or elsewhere, was such a doubtful experiment that there were few thoughtful men who were convinced that it must succeed. It seemed by no means certain that the close association of thirteen commonwealths, with diverse and often conflicting interests, could long survive. Even before the delegates to create the Constitution were appointed, the old Congress debated the question of a seat of government for the Federal nation that was then unborn.

When the Constitutional Convention assembled in 1787, it took up this problem, which seemed of prime importance, but did not solve it. The delegates from several states urged the claims of the sections which they represented and opposed all other applications. New Jersey, supported by several other states, persistently advanced arguments for the choice of Trenton, and a resolution was actually passed which provided for two alternating seats of government: one to be on the Delaware, and the other at Georgetown on the Potomac. So the North and the South were both to be satisfied. Subsequently other places were proposed and considered, and even tentatively chosen. Only New England failed in urgent presentation of any applications in that contest. Connecticut alone supported the pretensions of New York. Several of the contestants offered as an inducement large sums of money to be applied to the construction of suitable buildings. The claims of both Philadelphia and New York were opposed by a party led by George Mason of Virginia, on the ground that it would be unwise to establish the Federal capital in any city that was already the seat of a state government.

After much discussion, the weighty question was still unsettled when the Convention adjourned. It was at last decided, almost casually, by the Continental Congress, which before adjournment at New York, where its last session was held October 21, 1788, resolved that the new Congress should convene at the same place. On September 13, 1788, the measure was passed, in these words:

Resolved, That the first Wednesday in January next, be the day for appointing electors in the several states, which before the said day shall have ratified the said constitution . . . and that the first Wednesday in March next, be the time, and the present seat of Congress [New York] the place for commencing proceedings under the said constitution.

In view of New York's growing superiority in trade, its vitality, independence in thought, and leadership in political daring, it is not surprising that this cosmopolitan city, with its strong substratum of virile and adventurous Dutch blood, should have become the first experimental capital of the nation. Not only during the war had this been the strategic center about which the Revolution moved, but its revival after the war had been so remarkable as to presage the leadership it afterward assumed. Boston and Philadelphia were its only rivals in population and commercial supremacy, and the former of these cities had not contended for the honor of being the Federal capital.

Though relatively large at that time, to modern eyes the city that crowded the lower end of Manhattan Island would have seemed very small. A single one of the great buildings that now distinguish it would have accommodated all of its leading merchants and their families in 1789, and a modern steamship might have carried them all away. All the prominent people were known to one another, at least by sight. There were few very rich, and few distressingly poor. A criminal class was unknown, and rascality among business men would have been unprofitable. Social groups, here as in other small cities, depended largely upon church affiliations. Beyond the limited confines of the city there were productive farms that provided a considerable portion of the food consumed in the town. Where millions of people swarm today, intent on business or pleasure, there were wheat fields and pastures. The country roads on Manhattan Island crossed frequent brooks by means of unpretentious bridges, and such trees as the British soldiers had spared during their long occupancy shaded the rocky hillsides.

Wall Street was then the fashionable residence center, nearly midway between the Battery and the Common, where the City Hall now stands. To the northeast, houses were built as far as Catherine Street, three squares beyond Roosevelt Street, and

bordering the shipyards. The Roosevelt and Beekman names are associated with the tanneries that were beside the swamp, through which flowed the outlet of the "Fresh water" or Kalck pond, which was then popularly supposed to be bottomless, though the Fresh water has since been filled in, and Center Street crosses where the youth of the city used to fish and skate; the Tombs prison is on one end of it. On the west side of the Broadway, the city squares extended as far north as Duane Street. Along the North and East Rivers were wharves and markets, and there some of the most important of the merchants were situated. About the markets, the Dutch tongue was used as frequently as the English, especially on the west side, because that was the language commonly spoken by the men that ran the market boats down the Hudson.

The change in the habits, and indeed in the very disposition of the inhabitants of New York, in the half dozen years subsequent to the Revolution had been radical. In the Revolution, almost half of the people had been Tories, or, as they preferred to call themselves, loyalists. When the Whigs returned to their homes, unopposed in politics for the first time in their lives, their enthusiasm was great, and their practical experience in government considerable. The people were fortunate in having such leaders as Clinton, Jay, Hamilton, as well as other men of strong purpose and integrity, who, however they might differ in their theories of government, were all mighty proponents of ordered liberty and union.

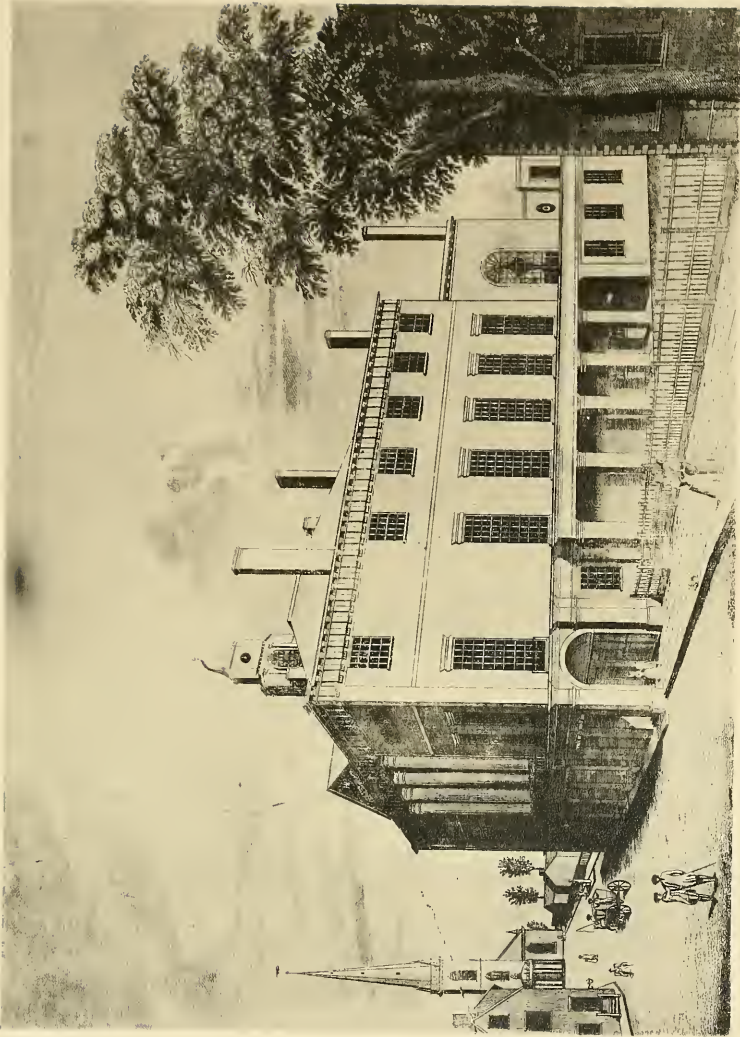
Of the royalists, a few of social prominence remained in the city, conforming outwardly to the new order, retaining at least a comfortable part of their fortunes and commercial supremacy, and aiding to form a new aristocracy that adopted the manners and copied the excesses of the old. When Thomas Jefferson was for a little while drawn into the company of these self-appointed social leaders, attending their dinners and their

routs, he was disgusted, and in his correspondence expressed himself in no equivocal terms. He reported these people as favoring royalty, among other ideas obnoxious to him. The late Paul Leicester Ford, the biographer of Jefferson, was perhaps misled by this witness when he wrote his estimate of the object of the New York merchants in advocating the establishment of the Federal capital in New York:

Whether the new government was to be federal, or anti-federal, monarchical, autocratic or republican, mattered little to the city of New York, which was to be the seat of the new government. The great city was fully alive to the advantage of being the capital of the Union, and though the state and the city governments declined to make proper preparations, the citizens promptly did so.

The fact is that New York had dared more and suffered more in rebellion against autocratic government than any other city in America. Her inhabitants had endured exile rather than submit to the excesses of monarchical rule. They sacrificed all they had, including homes, friends, and in many cases the dearest family contacts, for a cause that seemed to them sacred. Returning impoverished to their city, they had labored heroically for its rebuilding and prosperity. In view of these well-attested facts, we cannot reasonably suppose that six years after the conclusion of the war, the men of this city could be indifferent to the type of government that should be established, nor that the mere advantage of securing the national capital could outweigh every other consideration. Between Federalists and Antifederalists there was, it is true, some sharp division of sentiment, but the adherents to a monarchical government, formerly a majority of the influential citizens, were now reduced to a negligible minority.

That the city—not “great” at that time, even by comparison with other American cities—“was fully alive to the advantage



FEDERAL HALL

of being the capital of the nation," is easily conceivable, but that it desired such an advantage upon any terms not compatible with the convictions it had suffered for, there is not the slightest excuse for believing. As has been seen, several states contended for the honor and advantage of being host to Congress. Offers of accommodation, made by other commonwealths or cities, seem to have come from the merchants of those communities, as did a similar offer from New York. The government here was asked for funds to rebuild the City Hall, sadly out of repair, or to erect a new building. The refusal of the city and state authorities was on the ground that there were no funds available for that purpose. That reasonable response occasioned neither surprise nor resentment on the part of private citizens, who promptly subscribed \$32,500 (a large sum for that day, though it proved insufficient for the work undertaken). Major L'Enfant was employed to plan the rebuilding. That the officials were not antagonistic to this plan is indicated by the fact that no opposition was made to such a use of city property.

It is quite easy for authors to lose sight of the fact that the leaders in social life were few, though prominent, and that they alone were exploited in the journals of the day, which therefore present a distorted view of the city in 1789. Not the four hundred of Ward McAllister's time, but a scant three hundred out of twenty thousand, formed "The Republican Court" of the first capital. In that limited circle, the brilliant young lawyer, Alexander Hamilton, and his beautiful wife were conspicuous. Neither Hamilton nor his associates were advocates of democracy. To them the ideal government would have been an autocratic republic, founded upon wealth, and ignoring as co-agents in authority the common people—"peasantry," as they styled them.

March 4, 1789, had been chosen as the date for the convening of the new Congress and the inauguration of the President.

Owing to successive and unavoidable delays, neither the President nor all the members of the Congress had arrived in New York at the appointed time. The old Congress, that ineffectual, hard-working, disappointed and maligned Continental Congress, that miracle of survival through the long period of the war and the still more trying years that succeeded it, had come to its last day. The old Confederation died when the Union was born. That early spring day there was an air of expectancy throughout the city. "Pleasing and solemn ceremonies" were performed. At sunset, a salute from the guns at the battery sounded the requiem of the Confederacy. At sunrise the next morning, those same guns welcomed the new era. Bells were ringing, and unchecked demonstrations of joy succeeded the solemnity of yesterday. From one end of the little town to the other the people vied with one another in extravagant demonstrations of welcome to the new Constitution. Merchants, lawyers, shipbuilders, cartmen, laborers on the city's many wharves, all felt that not only peace and order but unprecedented prosperity was ahead.

At length the new Congress came together, and in the latter part of April Vice President John Adams arrived at the capital. The Light Horse of Westchester County, under Major Pintard, met him at the Connecticut line. At four o'clock on the afternoon of April 20, he was met at Kingsbridge and escorted into the city by a cavalcade. "Officers of distinction—many members of Congress—and a number of citizens in carriages and on horseback" accompanied him to the home of John Jay, as a "federal salute was fired." A committee of Congress extended congratulations to "his Excellency on his arrival," but the popular rejoicing was curtailed by a heavy rain. The next day he was conducted to the chair of the Senate in the chamber prepared by Major L'Enfant, installed into office and delivered his address of acceptance.

THE INAUGURATION OF THE FIRST PRESIDENT

When the report of the electors declared the choice of a President, Congress at once dispatched Charles Thomson to notify Washington of the decision. He reached Mount Vernon with the official notification on April 14 and two days later the President-elect started for New York. He recorded in his diary:

About ten o'clock I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life and to domestic felicity, and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York with Mr. Thompson and Col. Humphreys, with the best disposition to render service to my country in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations.

From Mount Vernon to New York, his progress was a continuous triumph. Every town and village through which he passed strove to do him honor. Amid the flaunting of flags, the firing of cannon and the plaudits of the population, he approached the place where he was to be inaugurated. During his progress, the excitement in New York, where most of the representatives from other states were by that time assembled, increased every hour. The city was in an uproar. Packets from Philadelphia and Boston, Newport and New Haven, arrived with eager, expectant passengers. Schooners from Albany, Kingston and other Hudson River towns were passing the Palisades for days, bringing entire families, many of whom were anticipating their first view of the metropolis. From every part of New England, New Jersey and even remote villages in Pennsylvania, people came on horseback, and in every kind of wheeled vehicle known to farmer or frontiersman. Matrons and maids rode on pillions behind their husbands or swains, while coaches with black Jehus in livery rolled in from the Van Cortlandt Manor on the Croton, or the Beekman mansion

at Tarrytown. Gay chaises ran afoul of ox carts. Never in the history of the city had there been such a concourse.

When Washington had crossed New Jersey, he found at Elizabethtown every preparation lavishly made for the last lap of his journey. There was the handsome barge, just completed, to which he was conducted by the committee appointed as his escort. There was Chancellor Livingston, dressed in black, grave and distinguished, with whom were the adjutant general, and the recorder, Col. Richard Varick. Included in this group were Mr. Thompson, and the chief of Washington's traveling suite, Col. David Humphreys. These gentlemen and others entered the barge with Washington and, at the moment they embarked, a salute, fired by the artillery stationed at Elizabethtown, was echoed from across the water by the guns at the Battery.

There were twelve oarsmen, no common tars, but every one a master pilot, selected to bring the President-elect through the Kill Van Kull, and across the Bay. The barge was accompanied by a second boat, in which were General Knox and John Jay, who were soon to be chosen Secretary of War and Chief Justice. With them were members of the Treasury Board. The procession swept on, constantly augmented as the open water beyond the Kill was reached. The upper bay was full of craft that made a holiday spectacle, every vessel being dressed in flags. It was an unprecedented scene in this beautiful harbor, gay and exhilarating beyond anything ever witnessed by those who thronged the river bank. The smallest skiff was not too tiny to support a weight of fluttering bunting, while swift sloops and schooners flaunted colors from stem to stern.

However, there was one exception to the universal welcome — one vessel alone showed no flags. Singular in that bright assembly, the Spanish war vessel "Galveston," that had slipped from her anchorage in the river mouth and floated down the bay, made no sign. But as the barge passed near the "Galveston,"

a sudden change took place. As though by magic every flag known in any port of the world broke out on her stays and rigging, covering her with bright decoration. At the same moment, her guns spoke, and as the thirteen reports thundered the salute, a spontaneous cheer rose from boat after boat, approving the Spaniard. This was the first salute fired by any vessel under the flag of a foreign power in honor of a President of the United States.

A large sloop bore down upon the barge, approaching as near as safety would permit, and from her deck a well-trained choir sang an ode especially written for the occasion, to the tune of "God Save The King." Other boats carried stringed bands. The ship "North Carolina" and the schooner "Columbus," just arrived from Charleston, sailed up the bay with colors flying, in time to join in the general rejoicing. As the barge passed the lower end of the island, the Battery guns were heard again, and, when the East River was reached, the cheers of the crowd that thronged the shore could be heard as far as Staten Island. It had been voted at the meeting of the Common Council on the previous day that sixteen pounds were to be expended for powder to be used in salutes, and that all the bells in the city were to be rung on the arrival of the barge. The tumult that resulted sounds in our fancy even now.

At Murray's wharf, at the foot of Wall Street, the rowers slackened speed and swung up to a flight of carpeted stairs where Governor Clinton, officers of the state, and other prominent people waited to greet Washington. Near the stairs, a coach with all the trappings of a royal equipage waited, to which a carpet was spread from the top of the stairs, and bowing attendants waited to usher the great man into it; but, courteously refusing this conveyance, Washington took his place, on foot, in the procession that was then forming. Leading the parade was Col. Morgan Lewis, with Majors Horton and Van Horne, after

whom followed the infantry and grenadiers under the command of Stakes, Scriba, Swartwout and Steddiford. Then came Bauman's artillery and Harsen's grenadiers. Gen. William Malcolm, commander of New York State militia, preceded a group including civil officers of the state and a committee of Congress, after which Governor Clinton and Washington marched together.

One would like to have seen that pageant as it appeared to a little lad of six, who lived not far away, on William Street, and who, it is to be hoped, had a point of vantage from which he could see the memorable procession as it swung into Pearl Street. Many years afterwards, Washington Irving was the biographer of the great man he saw that day—that tall, well-proportioned figure in blue and buff, marching with soldierly grace, his bared head seeming to the boy, as to the thousands that crowded the line of march, the head of a superman. The tumult of the multitude was like the sound of a great surf, echoing and reëchoing from the walls. The music of the bands, and even the pealing of all the bells, could hardly be heard above the extraordinary clamor. At times the pressure of the throng was so great that the military escort was obliged to halt for a time.

All the houses on Pearl Street, through which the procession moved, were decorated, many of them with elaborate designs. On mottoes and transparencies, the name of Washington was coupled with every virtue. The decorations were not confined to Pearl Street. The whole length of Wall Street was similarly enlivened, and even around on Broadway embellishments of appropriate character were not wanting. The home of Alexander Macomb, the architect, was among those that the papers of the day particularly noticed, and William Edgar's new house vied with it. Beautiful emblems were displayed at Madam Cuyler's, Richard Varick's, Alexander Hamilton's, and at the residences of many other notable people. One place that at-

tracted particular attention was the new brick dwelling of Captain Scriba, on Pearl Street, upon which were displayed several large allegorical designs.

Happily the rain that had threatened held off, except for a few premonitory drops, which the excited crowd apparently did not notice. In their exalted frame of mind, it is doubtful whether anything less than a deluge would have disturbed them.

Governor Clinton's courteous offer of his own residence to the President-elect having been declined, the procession proceeded northward. The house that had been fitted up for the President, at the city's cost, was on Cherry Street, and had been formerly occupied by presidents of the old Congress. It belonged to Mr. Osgood, and had been the home of his father-in-law, Walter Franklin, an old merchant of the city, after whom the adjacent square was named. It was a square brick building, three stories high, with a row of five windows across the front. That it did not prove sufficiently commodious for the President is evident, and the fact that it was not on Wall Street or Pearl Street made it less desirable. After some months Washington selected for himself a house that he preferred, and to which he moved. Toward evening, the rain that had threatened all day began to fall. Washington had accepted the invitation of Governor Clinton to dine with him, but, before starting to keep this appointment, he received the delegation representing the Chamber of Commerce and heard their felicitations, replying in a short, dignified speech. Then he drove forth quietly in the rain, accompanied by General Knox and others, to the governor's house.

Mrs. Washington did not arrive in New York in time to witness her august husband's reception. Without question, the disappointment of the fashionable women of the city was keen. Much had been said about the mistress of Mount Vernon, and there was naturally a good deal of curiosity about the lady who

would presently preside over the social life of New York. Her appearance, her manners, her costume, were matters of eager speculation and gossip.

The inauguration took place on April 30, at the new Federal Hall, at the intersection of Wall and Broad Streets, where the sub-treasury building is now. Opposite to it was the residence of Alexander Hamilton. On the flat roofs of dwellings in the neighborhood, throngs of people waited for hours, to witness the inauguration of the first President of the United States. On Nassau Street, near the Hall, and within a stone's throw of Hamilton, lived Aaron Burr. Having at that time no official position, Alexander Hamilton does not appear in the accounts of the reception tendered Washington, nor in the ceremonies of the inauguration, but there is no doubt that he filled a prominent part in the social attentions paid the President and Mrs. Washington, upon the latter's arrival in the city.

On the day that he became the President of the United States, Washington no longer practiced that simplicity which induced him to walk from Murray's wharf to his house. Now he appeared as the chosen head of the nation, no longer a private citizen. With that fine sense of proportion and appropriateness that always distinguished him, he assumed the dignity and pomp befitting his exalted station. Washington, the citizen, walked with other citizens; but Washington on his way to his inauguration rode in a resplendent coach, drawn by four horses, and attended by a guard of honor consisting of high officers in the full regalia of their military rank.

The procession escorting him started at twelve o'clock from the City Hall. Proceeding to Cherry Street, it reformed and returned to the Hall in the following order: Col. Morgan Lewis, as on the previous occasion, led, with two members of his staff, and the prancing horses of Captain Stakes' troop followed; next came the artillery and the grenadiers, and after them the

infantry; Sheriff Boyd followed, preceding the senatorial committee.

Flanked by aides and constables, Washington and his suite rode in dignified state, followed immediately by the committee of the House; after whom came the Hon. John Jay, General Knox, Chancellor Livingston, and other gentlemen, in carriages. As the procession reached Federal Hall, the ranks halted and divided. Washington dismounted from his coach and entered the building, as the crowd, that had waited for his arrival from dawn, cheered wildly for a moment, and then was silent again in eager anticipation of a ceremony that had no precedent in the history of the city or of the land.

Within the Hall, the members of the House of Representatives, preceded by Muhlenburg, the Speaker, marched into the Senate chamber after Mr. Lee announced, on behalf of the Senate, that that body was ready to receive them. The chamber, which was presently to be the scene of the unusual ceremony, was a large apartment, adorned with marble from American quarries, and decorated with architectural embellishments that were the invention of Major L'Enfant, who used as his motif a star with rays and the initials "U. S." in a monogram constantly repeated in the original design. A sun with thirteen stars appeared on the arched ceiling, that was otherwise plain. There were several chimneys and eight large windows in the chamber, four of the latter opening upon a balcony where Washington was soon to stand in sight of the multitude out of doors, and also in sight of his late aide and future Secretary of the Treasury, Hamilton, watching the ceremony from the window of his house. At the further end of the Senate chamber, under a canopy of crimson velvet, was the chair reserved for the President.

Into this room, attended by the gentlemen forming his immediate escort and the committee chosen to receive him, Washington came. At the door he was met by the recently installed

Vice President, John Adams, and escorted to his chair, and was then informed that the representatives of the United States were ready to attend him while he took the oath of office prescribed by the Constitution. In a few low but distinct words, Washington signified his readiness to proceed; then, accompanied by the whole body of gentlemen present, including members of both Houses of Congress and the representatives of foreign governments, he proceeded to the balcony and faced the eager concourse of citizens in the streets below. He was greeted with a spontaneous cry of joy. Cheer after cheer rang out, while the central figure in that novel scene waited for the greeting to subside and strove for that self-mastery which had always distinguished him under the most trying circumstances, but which now bade fair to be swept away by overmastering emotion.

Coming to the edge of the gallery, he bowed thrice to the excited people, and then, retiring to a chair, dropped his head into his hand, unable to speak. Instantly there was a sympathetic hush in the crowd. After a moment, Chancellor Livingston asked him if he were ready to take the oath? Replying in the affirmative, Washington went again to the front of the balcony, his self-control reestablished, and assented in a clear voice to the words repeated by the Chancellor: "I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of the President of the United States, and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States." Then, with a mien and in a tone expressive of religious fervor, he added, "So help me God."

So the great event had been enacted to the end without a mishap, though there had nearly been one hitch, for in making the arrangements the Bible had been forgotten. However, one of the committee raced to a Masonic lodge room near by, and secured the desired volume, which is still preserved. It was placed on the crimson cover of the table that stood at hand, and, when the

oath had been pronounced, the President turned toward Secretary Otis, who took the Bible to raise it to Washington's lips. Mr. Otis was a short man, in striking contrast with the President's stature. The latter thereupon took the book in his own hands, and reverently raising it, bowed over it and kissed it; upon which the cheers of the people were renewed. Bowing once more, the first President of the United States reëntered the Senate chamber. His speech to the Senate was both eloquent and moving, by its evident sincerity. It was thought of sufficient moment to record, and may interest readers of today to read, that on this great occasion Washington was clothed in a dark suit of American manufacture, with white silk stockings and silver shoe buckles. His powdered hair was tied in a club queue. At his side hung his steel-hilted dress sword. One observance remained, after the address to the Senate, to complete the greatest day in American history. Immediately after the ceremonies at Federal Hall, the President, Representatives and other officials proceeded to Saint Paul's chapel to invoke divine blessing on the new government.

Following the inauguration, both houses of Congress met without delay to consider questions of immediate importance. First of these was the framing of a tariff act, which insured a revenue, without which all the wisdom of all the sages could not have preserved the new nation from disaster. Upon July 4 a general tax was imposed upon all foreign imports. This act continued in force, with a few amendments, till 1816. The creation of a cabinet was another significant measure. The group of secretarial advisers to the President was small, compared to a cabinet of the twentieth century, but it was sufficient for the needs of the time. Under the provisions of this act, Thomas Jefferson, with his diplomatic experience as Minister to France, and his prominence as one of the framers of the Constitution, was naturally chosen as the first Secretary of State. It was not so

much a matter of course that the young lawyer, Alexander Hamilton, should be offered the Treasury, though now with our knowledge of his subsequent achievements the choice seems as if inevitable. General Knox headed the War Department; Edmund Randolph became Attorney General.

The question of a permanent Federal capital was settled by Congress while still in New York, though not without great opposition. The time decided upon for removal to Philadelphia was December, 1790. In July, 1790, an act provided for the selection by the President of a tract ten miles square on the Potomac River. The opposition to this act was maintained by most of the northern representatives, who held that the Georgetown site was too far south. It was strongly advocated, as was natural, by the southern members. The new Secretary of State threw his influence with the latter group, and Hamilton as vigorously upheld the former. It happened that during the same session Hamilton was striving for the passage of a bill by the provisions of which the Federal government would assume the settlement of certain claims against the states. Jefferson's instant and vehement objection to this measure was that urged by all Antifederalists, that it implied surrender of state sovereignty, and identified the creditor interest with the Federal government. That both this bill and the capital-site bill were passed was due to a notable trade, perhaps the first in our political history. Under direction of the first Congress, the Supreme Court was organized, and John Jay, a New York State man, was the first Chief Justice.

THE REPUBLICAN COURT

The comparatively small social circle in New York City, to which reference has already been made, formed a colorful nucleus around the central figure of the first administration, and the eyes of some historians as well as those of numerous fic-

tionists have been attracted and somewhat blinded by the brilliancy of this obtrusive group, so that they have been inattentive to the substantial mass of citizens who, by their energy and industry, were building the metropolis that has grown to greatness in our time. The effort of the self-constituted aristocrats was to construct something in the nature of a court, with the formalities and often absurd extravagances of European courts. It seems quite evident that Washington chafed under the rules and restrictions which some of his *entourage* tried to impose.

The first act of the socially elect to honor the President was to tender a ball, spoken of as the inauguration ball, in which we may be sure that the enthusiastic thousands that acclaimed him when he took the oath of office had no part. Foremost among those who conducted that brilliant affair were Alexander Hamilton and his charming and well-born wife and her relatives. There were also the Misses White, whose family, the Henry Whites, were royalists who had not found it necessary to join others of their kind in exodus, at the time of the evacuation in 1783. Two sons of that family were in the English military and naval service. The daughters, who were lively and attractive, were among the most popular belles of the smart set, among the members of which were Mrs. Verplanck, and Mrs. Hamilton's "vivacious" sister, Mrs. Church, who had lately returned from England with an extravagant wardrobe in all the latest modes. One of her costumes excited comment because the sleeves of the gown were "rolled back, like a washerwoman." It may be confessed that the beaux were not content to be inconspicuous. Foreign visitors frequently commented upon the prodigality of fashionable people in both dress and entertainment. The voluminous hoop skirt, that had its renaissance in the last half of the nineteenth century, was in its glory in 1789. Its billowy contour was subsidiary to brilliant silks and satins and an adornment of rare laces. Fashions were carried to extremes in hairdressing.

Young matrons became lovely caryatids supporting coiffures of incredible size and intricacy, and some that had less pretension to beauty carried the mode to grotesque proportions. It is said that Mrs. Knox, wife of the new Secretary of War, was unduly stout, and that her headdress was "a foot high, and in the form of a churn, bottom up." General Knox, who had acquired a handsome house on Broadway, was ruined, we are told, by the extravagant pace he and his wife tried to follow.

Cotillions were danced at balls and private entertainments. At one reception, given in Washington's honor by the French minister, the men who took part in the cotillion were in white uniforms, and to match them the ladies were also dressed in white, with "ribands and garlands of flowers." But though the presence of the President in New York was the explanation given for the ceaseless and glittering round of gaiety that attracted wide attention to the capital, yet Washington does not appear to have frequently attended these fêtes. The two reasons suggested to account for an abstinence that must seem strange, when we consider his known love for the society of young people and his enjoyment of dancing, are that his health was not robust, and that his mother's death, occurring about that time, disinclined him for social activity. May there not have been another reason? Although an aristocrat, it seems probable that the President's nice sense of propriety would have prevented him from identifying himself too closely with one element of the social life of the city.

The inauguration ball, which was not in any sense an official function, had been planned to take place immediately after Washington's inauguration, but was postponed till the seventh of May, no doubt to allow time for Mrs. Washington to arrive in the city. The statement that the ball was given at the city assembly rooms may be misleading, as the assembly rooms where social routs were frequently held were in the hostelry

known as the City Arms, on Broadway, and had no connection with the city government. The City Arms Tavern stood next to Robert Livingston's residence, and was the third building on the west side of lower Broadway. Besides the fashionable New York set that attended the inauguration ball, there were foreign visitors to the new capital, adding a touch of European manners for adaptive Americans to copy. There also were seen the official representatives from the thirteen states, many of them accompanied by their families.

Fenno's *Gazette*, a journal devoted to chronicling the doings of the great and the near-great in the metropolis, missed no opportunity to applaud their pretensions. Titles that were distinctly antirepublican were lavished *ad nauseam*. The fashionables that crowded to greet "Lady" Washington, on her arrival in the city, were Lady Stirling, Lady Mary Watts and Lady Kitty Duer, all of whom had a kind of tenuous claim to the title; "Lady" Clinton, who must have enjoyed it *ex officio*; the Marchioness de Brehan, sister of the French minister; the "Lady" of the "Most Honorable Mr. Walton," etc. Among the gentlemen of that gallant circle distinguished by frequent mention, we find the graceful and accomplished young lawyers, Aaron Burr and Alexander Hamilton, who at that period were antagonists only in their brilliant law practice.

Among the notable dinners of the time was one given to the President and his cabinet at the house afterward known as the Jumel mansion, then far out in the country and the seat of one of New York's prominent citizens; the modern city long ago overtook and enveloped such suburban places. At the President's own residence, members of the Senate and the House of Representatives, state and Federal officials, foreign visitors and local celebrities, all with their wives and daughters, were frequently entertained at dinner. Some of these people were exalted in the social firmament, as was Lady Christiana Griffin, whose title was

not one originated by Fenno's *Gazette*, for she was the daughter of the Scotch Earl of Traquair, as well as the wife of Cyrus Griffin of Virginia. When John Adams and his wife Abigail were entertained at Washington's table, their son John Quincy accompanied them. In that party were Governor Clinton, with his wife and two daughters, and Senator and Mrs. Dalton, who also brought two daughters. Besides these guests, there were several young married people. Whenever possible, Washington seems to have gathered about him the young folk. Of local celebrities there were not a few whose names appear in the lists of guests at the Executive Mansion. Judge James Duane, who had been a member of both the Continental Congress and the Constitutional Convention, was now Federal judge for the district of New York. After the evacuation in 1783, he had been the first mayor of the city. William Duer was a leading merchant of New York, who became Alexander Hamilton's right-hand man in the organization of the Treasury Department.

Besides these frequent dinner entertainments, Washington held weekly levees, that seem to have been open to all who observed the prescribed convention of formal dress. The President himself set the example in this respect, with powdered hair, velvet coat, silk stockings, silver buckles and dress sword. It is stated that at these levees the President did not shake hands with anyone, but engaged affably in conversation with his callers. Mrs. Washington's receptions, also of weekly occurrence, were attended with more or less regularity by the socially ambitious. These were less formal affairs, more social in character, commencing at an hour that would seem to us absurdly early, and after the consumption of wine and cake and the interchange of amenities, more stilted in expression but probably otherwise not vastly different from social conversation in this day, concluding about nine o'clock, when tradition affirms that the lady of the

house was wont to remark that it was the General's usual bedtime, and that she habitually preceded him.

Of these receptions there were notes made weekly in Washington's journal, and the memoranda always concluded with the observation that the company, whether many or few, were "Respectable." As there were no wasted words in that concise daily record of the President's life, we must suppose that the phrase meant something. We find that meaning when we translate "Respectable" into "socially acceptable," which is its evident significance. The President was jealously insistent that his wife should be recognized as the first lady of the land, though the title had not then been invented; yet he was not always so punctilious regarding his own contacts. His diary for the first years of his presidency presents two portraits of him that do not seem consistent. The Chief Magistrate, exact in the observance of official etiquette and meticulous in demanding the deference due to his rank, seems to change places with the ex-planter, ex-surveyor, horseman and accomplished traveler, who, when not conscientiously setting precedents for other Presidents to follow, was studying the primitive manufactures of native looms, commenting on the quality of cattle, chatting with Long Island farmers on their methods of planting and cultivating grain, estimating the value of farm land, calling informally on people of no political importance. When on his New England tour, he kept a record of the excellence, or the lack of it, in the inns he visited, and enjoyed meeting and conversing with interesting people by the way, but snubbed Governor Hancock because the latter failed to pay him proper deference by calling upon him. He employed several secretaries, and insisted that representatives, when making a report, should bring it to his house, but he personally planned a stable to accommodate his seven horses. The fact seems to be that Washington was constantly on guard lest he should do something to lower the dignity of his office, and,

when the occasion for punctilious behavior passed, he was again the simple-minded and neighborly gentleman who wanted nothing in the world so much as to get back to his Virginia plantation. Those who saw only one side of Washington sometimes accused him of aping royalty, and there has always lingered an impression of an austere and somewhat imperious person whose place is on a pedestal.

After a few months in the not entirely convenient house provided for him on his arrival, Washington began to look around for other quarters. Although the great influx into the city when it became the Federal capital had created something like a boom in real estate, there seems no evidence that the real estate agent had yet appeared. At least the President dealt personally with the owner of the Alexander Macomb house on Broadway, to which he presently began to move. His first care was for his horses, and we note that his secretaries were the first to occupy quarters in the new premises. Then he personally superintended the setting up of furniture. In all this work, there is no indication that Mrs. Washington took part.

It is a matter of record that the President liked the theater, and had his box, on the door of which, we are told, the arms of the United States were displayed. But the august head of the nation was also regular in his church attendance, at Saint Paul's chapel; the new Trinity building, which later replaced the edifice that had been burned, had not then been opened.

Our modern multiplication of holidays was unknown to the fathers whom we are prone to envy. The first to be celebrated under the new government was the Fourth of July, which was spoken of by Washington as "The Independency." At first the celebration was not characterized by the wild popular demonstrations that later became associated with the observance of the day. Oratory was not wanting, but perhaps the people had had a surfeit of villainous saltpeter during the war, and were

not yet as ready as their descendants to explode it to express joyous emotion. In 1790 the Fourth fell on a Sunday, and the observance was postponed till the fifth, when "grave and sober exercises" were held. The members of both houses of Congress and the incumbents of all public offices, with distinguished foreigners, members of the Cincinnati and others, called on the President, "with the complements of the day.—About one o'clock a sensible oration was delivered in St. Paul's chapel by Mr. Brockhulst Livingston, on the occasion of the day, the tendency of which was to show the different situation we are now in, under an excellent government of our own choice, to what it would have been if we had not succeeded in our opposition to the efforts of Great Britain to enslave us—There were several other points touched upon in a sensible manner." Here we have the first recorded Fourth of July oration delivered in New York, as reported by the nation's first President.

On October 3, 1789, the first Thanksgiving-Day proclamation was issued by Washington, and on the twenty-sixth of the month the appointed festival was held. The President repaired to Saint Paul's chapel and recorded the fact that few people attended the service. It is possible that in other churches, more generally attended by the plain people, the religious observance of the holiday was more marked. As this was simply a national adoption of an old New England custom, it is probable that it took a considerable time to become acclimated. As to the culinary adaptation of the festival, we have no reliable record, but we may believe that the traditional dishes of Puritan Land underwent some substitution before they suited the gustatory demands of Cowenhovens and Van Dams.

As on other days established for public observance, Washington's first New Year's Day in New York was much of it occupied with the reception of visitors, but unlike other days this one presented more of a social character. Besides the Vice Presi-

dent, the governor and all officialdom, many eminent citizens also called to pay their felicitations to the President and Mrs. Washington, in which they followed an old custom that had been observed from the time of the city's settlement. It did not die out till the latter part of the nineteenth century. On this day, every man, arrayed in his best clothes, set out early in the afternoon to pay his respects to all his friends, and at each house the women were ready to receive guests. The best rooms, those carefully guarded chambers that in all houses of that time were reserved for formal occasions, were opened and furbished; tables were spread with cakes and other comestibles, pickled oysters being one of the delicacies never omitted, besides wine and other liquors in abundance. All through the afternoon, callers arrived and departed, singly and in groups, becoming merrier as the hours passed and the potations multiplied. There was much rivalry among the belles as to the profusion and excellence of entertainment offered, and among the men in the number of calls accomplished. This unique observance of New Year's day evidently made a strong impression upon Washington and the representatives from other states, for from the first of January, 1790, it became a rite seldom omitted during any administration till that of Woodrow Wilson.

The preëminence of the city on Manhattan as the Federal capital was very short. When Congress adjourned on August 12, 1790, it was to meet at Philadelphia for its last session. On the thirtieth of that same month, the first President of the United States departed in the barge that had brought him to his inauguration, but now the throngs of spectators were silent and depressed. Perhaps they realized the truth, as they watched the receding figure of their revered leader till it was indistinguishable in the distance: for he was never to return.

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THE VALLEYS OF THE SUSQUEHANNA
AND THE DELAWARE

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THE RACE FOR THE SUSQUEHANNA

THE permanent settlement of the vast region included in the Susquehanna and Delaware Valleys was relatively late, in comparison with that of the Hudson and Mohawk areas. This tardy occupation was due to several causes. Nature had provided the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers, with their tributaries, as most convenient routes for pioneers. So for a long time there was but little to attract white settlers to the south-central portion of the present New York State. The valleys of the Susquehanna and Delaware were far in the interior and separated from the Hudson and Mohawk by a wilderness, pathless except for Indian trails. The upper portions of the rivers, especially the tortuous Susquehanna, were a great distance from their mouths, and neither river offered satisfactory navigation to the interior. The two most favorable passages to the Susquehanna Valley led from the Hudson and the Mohawk. The former was a long hard overland journey either from Catskill or from Albany to the head waters of the Charlotte River and down that stream to the Susquehanna. The entrance from the Mohawk was from Canajoharie along Bowman's Creek, and on to Otsego Lake. From the outlet of that lake, the pioneers and their supplies could reach the Susquehanna Valley to the south. The valley of the Delaware, though nearer the Hudson, was also separated from that river by a wilderness pierced by no direct route.

The dispute of New York with New Jersey and Pennsylvania over boundaries also retarded the settlement of the valleys. Tradition holds that in the latter half of the seventeenth century, as the result of the discovery of copper in the Minisink region by

the Dutch, settlers from Holland took up tracts of land on the Delaware. Huguenots from Kingston about 1690 joined this group. As the settlement extended farther south, serious trouble resulted. When the county of Sussex was formed in New Jersey, the boundary was placed so far north that it was claimed by New York to be an invasion of "the bounds formerly set for Minisink." The New York government asserted that officers of Orange County, in which Minisink was located, had been "repeatedly beaten, insulted and prevented from the execution of their respective offices; taken prisoners, . . . and thrown into jail." It was further asserted that the people of New Jersey "as often as . . . able," took possession of vacant lands in Orange County, and "frequently beset the homes of subjects by night and attempted to seize and make prisoners of his majesties subjects." In 1753, troubles over the boundary were still characterized as "great and continuous quarrels" and it was predicted that "tumults between the persons near the contested bounds and bloodshed and murder were like to ensue." Invasions were made by New York men "even down to Minisink's Island, a place about forty miles below North Station Point," now Cushietunk, Pennsylvania. The boundary dispute was complicated later by the overlapping of the land patents.

The potential value of the upper Susquehanna Valley was apparent to Pennsylvania as well as to New York. William Penn, relying on his charter of 1681, looked with greedy eyes upon central New York; and New Yorkers realized the danger in Penn's ambition to divert the fur trade from Albany to Philadelphia. To accomplish his purpose, Penn sent representatives to purchase the Susquehanna territory from the Indians. Such action was strongly resented by the New York trading posts, especially by Albany, which realized that its very existence was threatened. Consequently a contest arose to see which colony should get possession of the Susquehanna Valley and the trade

with the Iroquois. The advantage lay with New York because of the "covenants of friendship" and trade with the Iroquois dating from 1624.

The lands in question were claimed by the Cayugas and Onondagas by right of conquest. In 1679, these two tribes made over their conquered lands on the Susquehanna to the government of New York; and in 1683, three weeks after James Graham and William Haig, land agents of Penn, were in Albany trying to effect with them the purchase of the Susquehanna lands, the Indians ratified "the gift and conveyance" of all the conquered lands on the Susquehanna above Wyalusing, Pennsylvania, to New York by a formal sealed document. The next year an alliance against the French was concluded by the English with the Cayugas and Onondagas, in which the Indians declared: "We have given the Susquehanna River, which we wonn with the sword to this Government and desire that it may be a branch of that great tree that grows here, whose topp reaches to the Sunn."

Thus New York's first title to the land on the Susquehanna was acquired. However, the Indians considered the Susquehanna land as property which, along with themselves, they had placed "under the protection of the king," hoping thus to be protected from the French, but retaining the right to live and hunt on it. As for actual title to the land, therefore, these two acts had but doubtful value. Their interest lies rather in the victory of New York over the ambition of William Penn, and of the English "thirst for land" in contrast with the Dutch desire merely to seek routes for the fur trade without aiming at ownership. Sixty years later, in a conference at Albany, the Indians declared that their forefathers had made the conditional transfer merely to secure protection and to prevent William Penn and others from imposing upon them.

Governor Dongan, on the other hand, voiced the belief of the

English that they had obtained actual ownership of the land when, in his official report of 1687, he stated that he had been obliged "to give a great deal for the Susquehanna river," and proposed that forts be built on the Delaware and the Susquehanna. In reply to this report, Dongan received the following suggestion from London: "We think you will doe well to preserve yo^r interest there as much as possible that soe nothing more may goe away to M^r. Penn or ether New Jerseys." The governor and Council of New York expressed the fear that, if the control of the fur trade of the valley were lost, the income of New York would be so reduced that the provincial government could not maintain itself and the town of Albany would be depopulated. New York had won in its contest with William Penn, and in consequence maintained its fur trade with the Iroquois to Albany's advantage, but a natural result of the controversy was to postpone the coming of settlers into the valley.

In the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, as has been shown in previous volumes, the most conspicuous feature of the English land policy in New York was the granting of enormous tracts to persons of political influence. In the latter part of this period, a few men obtained titles to land along the Susquehanna, but the English were slow in realizing the possibilities of these frontier lands until later in the century, when (after 1738) there was little unpatented land left on the Hudson below Albany or on the lower Mohawk. Among the early grants in the Susquehanna Valley were the Cherry Valley patent of 18,000 acres, made in 1738 to John Lindesay, sheriff of Albany County, Jacob Roseboom, Lendert Gansevoort and Sybrant Van Schaick; the grants of 1738 and 1740 to Arendt Bradt of Schenectady, commissioner of Indian Affairs; "Petries Purchase" in 1740 to John Henderson, Theobald Young and others; the grants of 1741 to John Groesbeck and Volkert Oothoud; the grant of 1751 to "William Johnson and Company"; those of

1755 to Rudolph Staley and David Schuyler; those of 1761 to Godfried Miller and John Christopher Hartwick; and that of 1765 to Frederick Young.

Toward the close of the seventeenth century, after the formation of Orange County in 1683, active competition in obtaining patents began in the Minisink region. Governor Cornbury granted patents for vast areas lying west of the Hudson Valley settlements, among which were those in 1697 to Arent Schuyler and to the original settlers of Peenpack; the Wawayanda patent of 1703 to John Bridges and eleven others; the Great Minisink patent to Stephen de Lancey, Matthew Ling and twenty-two others in 1704; the Cheesecoaks patent of 1707 to Anne Bridges and several others; and the Great or Hardenbergh Patent of 2,000,000 acres east of the west branch of the Delaware to Johannes Hardenbergh of Kingston, and others, in 1708, an enormous tract extending over a large part of Delaware, Sullivan, Ulster and Greene Counties.

THE INDIAN PROPERTY LINE AND LAND GRANTS

The English acquisition of land caused discontent among the Five Nations. To curb this disaffection over the white man's avidity for land, through the influence of Sir William Johnson the Treaty of Fort Stanwix was made November 5, 1768, by which the title to a vast territory, including part of New York, was obtained by purchase from the Indians. The land was transferred with "all the hereditaments and appurtenances to the same belonging, or appertaining, in the fullest and most ample manner . . . either in law or equity of each and every one of us unto our said Sovereign Lord King George III, his heirs and successors to and for his and their own proper use and behoof forever."

For this extensive domain, \$50,600 was paid the Indians.

King George at first opposed the payment of so large a sum, which he considered "very unreasonable," holding that England should not have "any part or expence of a measure calculated for the local interests of particular colonies." But before the king's objections were known in the colonies, Sir William Johnson had been compelled to proceed with the negotiations. He wrote Lord Hillsborough that the sum agreed on "was the most moderate that could have been offered for so valuable and extensive a cession." Johnson later proposed a plan to repay the imperial expenditure from a tax of \$50 for each thousand acres granted.

The treaty line of 1768 extended from a point on the Allegheny River, several miles above the present city of Pittsburgh, northeastward to the head of Towanda Creek, thence down that stream to the Susquehanna, northward along the Susquehanna to Tioga Point (Athens, Pennsylvania), northeastward to Owego (Ahwaga), and southeastward to a point on the Delaware River a few miles below Hancock. From there it ran up the Delaware to a point "opposite to where Tianaderha falls into the Susquehanna" at Cookose (Deposit), thence northward to the Tianaderha (Unadilla) River, up the west branch of that stream "to the head thereof," northward along Egwaga Creek, and northwestward to a point seven miles west of Fort Stanwix. The Indians insisted that "lands occupied by the Mohawks around their villages, as well as by any other nation affected by this our cession, may effectually remain to them and their posterity." From these reservations developed the future discontent that helped bring about the border wars of the Revolution.

The following year, 1769, Simon Metcalf, a government surveyor sent to run the Property Line, began work at Cookose and established a line that still remains the western boundary of Delaware County. A boundary line through central New York

had been suggested to Johnson at the council at Fort Stanwix, by a committee of four Indians, who urged that the line be run from Oriskany "to the Tianaderha," down that river to the Susquehanna, and then "in a straight line to the hills and so to the Delaware branch and down the same to Owego" (Owego). This line the surveyors followed.

In arranging the treaty, his last great act, Sir William Johnson encountered opposition from the missionaries of the valley. Generally serving to aid the opening of the valley to the whites, in this instance they operated as a hindrance. Johnson said they "did all in their power to prevent the Oneidas (whose property part of the Susquehanna is) from agreeing to any line that might be termed reasonable." The missionaries had publicly declared that they "had taken infinite pains with the Indians to obstruct the line and would continue so to do." Johnson added that the New Englanders "had had missionaries for some time amongst the Oneidas and Oghwages and I was not ignorant that their old pretension to the Susquehanna lands was their real, though religion was their assumed object."

Nor was it an easy matter to reach a satisfactory conclusion with the Indians concerning the boundary line. The English authorities had hoped to run the line "northward from Owego." But Johnson later explained that it was "extremely difficult to get the line so far to the westward from its vicinity to their own towns, and indeed the whole of the line as it approached them cost me more pains and trouble than can be conceived." This explains the irregular course of the line from Owego to the Unadilla. Johnson's treaty was finally sanctioned by the crown on December 9, 1769, when Hillsborough wrote that it was the king's pleasure "that you should declare the royal ratification of the treaty of Fort Stanwix in such manner as has been usual on the like occasions." Accordingly the treaty was ratified by Johnson in July, 1770.

Because prior to the Treaty of Fort Stanwix land titles in the Susquehanna and Mohawk Valleys were of doubtful validity, the Fort Stanwix deed was inevitable. Following this real estate transfer—one of the largest in early American history—the business of obtaining land patents thrived with renewed energy. Among those granted may be noted that of George Croghan of the Indian Department, who in 1769 obtained from the Indians a conveyance of 100,000 acres lying on the west side of the Susquehanna River and Otsego Lake, given to compensate him for the lands in Pennsylvania which, by the terms of the treaty of Fort Stanwix, he would lose. In addition, Croghan received 18,000 acres near Cherry Valley, and purchased other huge tracts. The provincial government on November 30, 1769, issued letters patent to him and ninety-nine other persons. The inclusion of ninety-nine other persons was necessary because of the law, following the suggestion of the Board of Trade in 1698, which forbade the granting of more than one thousand acres or, with rare exceptions, of two thousand acres, at one time to any one individual. On December 2, 1769, however, these ninety-nine associates conveniently conveyed to George Croghan, in three separate instruments, their rights in fee simple.

In the same year to John Butler, deputy Indian commissioner under Sir William Johnson and afterward a Tory colonel in the border wars, were granted two tracts: one east of the Unadilla River, the other southeast of the headwaters of the Charlotte River. Butler's land during the Revolution was forfeited by attainder. In 1769 were also granted the patent to Col. Staats Long Morris, an officer in the British army; the patent of 22,000 acres on the Charlotte to John Harper; to John Wetherhead a still larger tract, lying between John Butler's Charlotte River grant and the Schoharie patents; and a tract between Canadurango Lake and Otsego Lake to John McNeile.

The many patents that were granted in 1770 show how

quickly the English availed themselves of the opportunity to acquire land after the treaty of Fort Stanwix was ratified. Among the patents were those of Leonard Lispenard, Robert and William Edmeston, Peter Middleton and Clotworthy Upton, on the Unadilla River; the Otego tract of 69,000 acres to Charles Reade, Thomas Wharton, William Trent, Richard Smith and others; the patent of 58,000 acres to Alexander McKee and others; the Franklin patent of 30,000 acres to Thomas Wharton, Rose Meredith and others; the Richard Loudon patent; and the Charlotte River, or Adaquetangie, patent of 26,000 acres to Sir William Johnson and others. South of the Susquehanna River and extending southeast from Johnson's patent to the East Branch of the Delaware, were Laurence Kortright's grant of 22,000 acres; John de Berniere's tract of 2,000 acres; 5,000 acres to Robert and John Leake, later forfeited by attainder; 2,000 acres to James Clark; 2,000 acres to Charles Babington; the Bedlington patent of 27,000 acres to John Leake and associates; the patent of 20,000 acres to William Walton and associates; 38,000 acres to Henry White and others, subsequently forfeited by attainder; and a small tract to Edward Tudor. In 1775 a tract of 30,000 acres in this same section between the Susquehanna and Delaware Rivers was granted to John Rapelje and others.

These tracts, varying in size from 2,000 to 40,000 acres, were surveyed, divided, subdivided and sold to different proprietors, so that when they came into the possession of actual settlers very few were conveyed by the original patentees. Since most of the patents were obtained solely for the purpose of land speculation, but few of the original patentees continued to hold them long. One notable exception was the patent in Otsego County to the Clarks, who never sold land until forced to do so. Though Tories, the owners were minors during the Revolution, so the act of confiscation did not apply to them.

Perhaps the most noted of these patents of 1770 is the Wallace or Banyar patent, commonly called the Sir William Johnson tract, already mentioned. By the terms of the Treaty of Fort Stanwix, that part of Johnson's patent of 1751 lying to the north and west of the Property Line returned to Indian possession. On March 21, 1770, Sir William Johnson and certain associates set forth that they had petitioned for 100,000 acres lying between the Charlotte River and the Pennsylvania line; that they had purchased this land from the Indians; that now after the Treaty of Fort Stanwix, they desired only a part of the tract; and that they prayed for not more than 54,000 acres in two or more patents. On May 8, 1770, the grant mentioned above, of 26,000 acres along the Charlotte River, called the Charlotte River or Adaquetangie patent, was made to Sir William Johnson and his associates. The rest of the 54,000 acres was granted on June 16, 1770, in a separate patent to Alexander and Hugh Wallace, who were perhaps never actual owners, and twenty-six associates, each to own a twenty-eighth part.

This patent illustrates the curious fact that not infrequently the real owners were not those to whom the patent was issued, for Goldsbrow Banyar was doubtless the real owner. From him John Livingston, the Lansings and the Van Vechtens seem to have acquired their holdings. Such a peculiar arrangement existed because, after the grant of the Hardenbergh patent on the Delaware in 1708, an actual monopoly of land existed which was not relished by the British government. Therefore an order was issued, as we have seen, forbidding grants of more than 2,000 acres to single individuals or, when associated together, of a number of thousands in proportion to the number of associates. Later instructions gave 1,000 acres as the maximum for each patentee. These acts, though they checked in a measure the land monopoly, did not entirely end the condition, for the law was cunningly evaded by the land speculators. One scheme de-

vised to get around the limitation was for various persons to serve temporarily as "fictitious owners" of the grant, and then turn over their titles to the real owners. The Charlotte River patent illustrates also the custom of leasing lands on the redemption plan - a fixed annual rent for a definite area, with the privilege of purchase at a stated price.

During the interval between 1768 and 1775, practically all the leading men of New York were connected with the land patents of the Susquehanna Valley. Speculation was extensive; fortunes were made and lost. It was the custom of the English, following the example of the Dutch, first, with the permission of the governor and the Council, to obtain a title to the land by purchase from the Indians inhabiting the area. A warrant was then issued to the surveyor-general for a survey. After a map and field notes were reported, the attorney general was directed to prepare a draft of the patent, which was submitted to governor and Council. If approved, the patent was engrossed upon parchment, recorded, sealed and issued. The fees connected with the issuing of patents being an important source of income, the royal governors encouraged the grants. In fact, fees and influence appear to have been about all that was necessary to obtain land patents east and south of the Property Line. Consequently in this matter the colonial government became exceedingly corrupt during the later eighteenth century. The public domain continued to be the prey of land speculators until the end of the colonial period.

Important grants were made still later. A grant of 29,812 acres on the east bank of the Susquehanna in Tioga County, known as Coxe's Manor or patent, was issued on January 15, 1775, to Daniel, William and Rebecca Coxe, John Tabor Kempe and Grace (Coxe), his wife. The tract was a portion of 100,000 acres patented to these persons in return for the surrender of their rights to lands in Carolina and Georgia, granted in 1629

to Sir Robert Heath, and from him "devised" through the Coxes' father to them and Kempe. According to the petition for this grant, which was filed on October 3, 1774, the tract was described as being in the county of Tryon, and as "beginning at a place called Owegg, on the Susquehanna River," and running along the northern boundary of Pennsylvania.

In 1784, Rebecca, John D. and Tench Coxe filed a caveat in the land office protesting against the granting by the state of any certificates of location, warrants of survey, or letters patent for lands west of the Delaware River and north of the Pennsylvania border line until the claim of said protestors to a tract of 29,812 acres of land on the east bank of the Susquehanna River should be lawfully and fully recognized. The claims of the Coxe heirs were confirmed subsequently, and the tract, as surveyed in 1806-7, was found to contain 30,900 acres.

On June 27, 1786, New York State granted a patent for a tract of land on both banks of the Susquehanna River, comprising 30,600 acres, to Col. Robert Lettice Hooper, James Wilson and William Bingham, of Pennsylvania. On February 11, 1790, the proprietors partitioned the tract among themselves. In this division, the western part of the tract fell to Wilson and was afterward called "Wilson's patent," although Hooper probably held an interest with him for a time. The Bingham tract lay at the east end of the purchase.

South of the Bingham tract was one of the Sidney tracts, which was patented to Robert Morris on December 13, 1787. North of and containing a small part of the present city of Binghamton, and east of the Chenango River, lay the section called the Clinton and Melchior tract, which was patented to James Clinton and Isaac Melchior on March 19, 1787. The tangled difficulties of grant, sale and resale, with sketchy and inadequate surveys which led to long-drawn litigation were sadly characteristic of the valleys' history.

THE TREATY WITH MASSACHUSETTS IN 1786

Soon after the close of the War of Independence, Massachusetts claimed under her original charter from the crown an extensive area lying within the present limits of New York State. This claim dated from November 3, 1620, when the Plymouth Company was incorporated, it being granted a tract "in breadth from the fortieth to the forty-eighth degree of north latitude, and . . . from sea to sea; provided always that any part of the premises herein before mentioned . . . be not actually possessed or inhabited by any other Christian prince or state." To this company were also granted the jurisdiction and the royal preëmption of the soil, with the authority to distribute its territory and assign its prerogatives to companies for the purpose of occupation and settlement.

Accordingly, in 1628 the Great Council of Plymouth ceded to the Massachusetts colony all the territory lying between the Merrimac River and the Charles River "and in that width running west from the Atlantic ocean to the South sea on the West Part." This grant was confirmed by Charles I in 1629 and a royal charter issued for the same. The charter of 1629 was vacated in 1684, and another granted by William and Mary in 1691. The territory embraced within the boundaries fixed by the latter charter extended from north latitude $42^{\circ} 2'$ to north latitude $44^{\circ} 15'$, and from ocean to ocean.

In 1630 the Great Council granted to its president, the Earl of Warwick, a large tract of territory for which a royal charter was issued. In 1631 the Earl conveyed to Lord Saye and Sele, Lord Brooke and nine others the territory of Connecticut lying between the forty-second parallel, the Massachusetts line, on the north, and the forty-first parallel on the south, and extending that width east and west from sea to sea. In 1662, the Connecticut colony was chartered by the king, the proprietors having

previously purchased from Lord Saye and Sele and others their rights in the territory. The Great Council in 1635 handed over to the crown its jurisdiction over the territory, in the words of the original grant, mentioning, however, that the said territory extended to the westward about 3,000 miles.

In 1664, Charles II conveyed to his brother James, Duke of York, "all that island or islands commonly called Mattawacks or Long Island, together with Hudson's river and all the land from the west side of Connecticut River, to the east side of Delaware Bay." Thus by royal grant, later confirmed by treaty with Holland, the Duke of York acquired the Dutch possessions along the Hudson and Mohawk Rivers and their lands in New Jersey which ran through the territory specified in the Massachusetts and Connecticut charters.

New York in 1780 ceded to the United States all her land beyond her present western boundary, and in 1785 Massachusetts made a similar grant. There remained, however, about 19,000 square miles of territory east of that boundary still in dispute. Massachusetts formally asserted her claim to this region under the royal charter of 1628, while New York set forth her claim to the territory by virtue of her protectorate over the Six Nations. Therefore Massachusetts petitioned Congress in 1784 to adjust the dispute under the ninth of the Articles of Confederation, which provided that Congress should be "the last resort or appeal in all disputes . . . between two or more states, concerning boundary, jurisdiction or any other cause whatever." Congress took preliminary steps to effect an amicable settlement by calling for a cession of territory by both sides. However, before the Federal court, created for the purpose, could act in the matter, the legislatures of the two states, in violation of the article quoted, appointed ten special commissioners with full power to settle the dispute. The two states were represented as follows: John Lowell, James Sullivan, Theophilus Parsons and Rufus

King for Massachusetts; James Duane, Robert R. Livingston, Robert Yates, John Haring, Melancton Smith and Robert Benson for New York.

Accordingly these commissioners met at Hartford, Connecticut, in 1786, and decided that Massachusetts should have the right of preëmption of the soil (the right of first purchase from the Indians), and New York the rights of government, sovereignty and jurisdiction, to all the land, except a tract a mile wide along the Niagara River, in western New York. This area comprised 6,000,000 acres lying west of the Preëmption Line, drawn due north from the eighty-second milestone on the Pennsylvania north line and extending through Seneca Lake to Sodus Bay on Lake Ontario.

New York also ceded to Massachusetts the right of preëmption to 230,400 acres lying along the Susquehanna River, including the western half of Broome County and the eastern half of Tioga County, described as follows: "To be located to the northward of and adjoining to the lands granted respectively to Daniel Coxe and Robert Lettice Hooper, and their respective associates, and between the rivers Owego and Chenango." It is believed that the Massachusetts commissioners had definite knowledge of the possibilities of this locality when they selected the lands.

Thus by the award New York obtained exclusive jurisdictional rights belonging to sovereignty, while to Massachusetts was granted the right to negotiate with the Indians and to purchase from them the ownership of the soil. It was also provided that a copy of every treaty and of every grant from Massachusetts to any individual should be recorded, within six months, in the office of the secretary of state of New York. Although the agreement was never formally ratified by Congress, nevertheless it has been recognized as legal by the courts and has been accepted as the basis of titles and transfers made by Massachusetts.

The agreement was a bad bargain for New York State. How the final decision was reached is unknown, for no records of the proceedings of the Hartford Convention have been found either in the New York or in the Massachusetts archives.

The Susquehanna River tract, known as the Boston Purchase or Ten Townships, was granted by Massachusetts in 1787 to Samuel Brown and ten associates. To the association the original grantees afterward admitted forty-nine other members, some of whom were influential Boston men. The purchase price was 3,333 Spanish milled dollars, payable in two years and subject to the deduction of the sum paid for the extinguishment of the Indian claims, a cost of 12½ cents an acre. On the confirmation of the Indian purchase by the Massachusetts legislature, the sum was increased to \$5,000 with no allowance for an amount to be paid the Indians. Samuel Brown, Elijah Brown, Orringh Stoddard and Joseph Raymond, on behalf of the company, purchased the title of the Indians and fully extinguished their claims in 1788.

The conclusion of this transaction was accomplished with difficulty, owing to a claim made to a portion of the tract by James McMaster and Amos Draper. These men had secured, in 1783 or 1784, a written contract from the Indians guaranteeing them the possession of certain land. Because the purchase had been conducted legally prior to their own, and because of McMaster's and Draper's influence with the Indians, the purchase of the Indian claims by the Boston Company could not be concluded until McMaster had been given title to eighteen square miles known as the McMaster half-township, on which the present town of Owego stands.

After the treaty with the Iroquois, the territory in question was surveyed and disposed of to patentees. In 1789, the New York legislature passed an act directing Surveyor-General Simeon DeWitt to survey the lands acquired by the treaty of

1788, and to lay out in the territory immediately to the north of the land acquired by the treaty of 1785, twenty townships, subdivided into lots. Two lots in each township near the center were to be reserved for religious and school purposes. The legislature arranged to sell five of the choicest of the twenty townships. The sale took place, but the towns fell largely into the hands of speculators.

This tract is now variously known as the Governor's Purchase, Clinton's Purchase and the Chenango Twenty Townships. In the attempt to make the township lines straight, small triangular areas were left bordering on the Unadilla River. It was at first supposed that the interval between the Unadilla and the Military Tract was included in the Chenango Twenty Townships. Later it was found that because of a mistake in fixing the point for starting the survey, and because of a variation of the compass, there was left between the west line of the Twenty Townships and the east line of the Military Tract, a strip, slightly wider at the north end than the south, called the Gore, which extended north and south the entire length of the Twenty Townships.

SETTLEMENTS BEFORE THE REVOLUTION

White men are said to have appeared in the upper Susquehanna Valley as early as 1616, first as explorers, then as traders. No conditions in the early patents required of the grantees the settlement or improvement of their tracts. Furthermore, the land owners preferred the Dutch custom of leaseholding rather than that of the actual sale of lands in fee simple to settlers. Even when willing to sell, the proprietors often charged such high prices that the settlers could not afford the cost. In consequence, the settlers often sought other colonies where conditions were more favorable, and New York fell behind in the

process of settlement. Nevertheless, promising beginnings in settling the Susquehanna and Delaware Valleys were made prior to the Revolution. Owners of patents, after the size of the patents was limited, naturally desired that their lands should be occupied, both for their own profit and because the law so required. To the headwaters of the Susquehanna came the Calvinist Scotch-Irish, whose settlements were the extreme outposts of civilization in the province. In the early eighteenth century, within two years' time, about 30,000 of these liberty-loving Scotch-Irish migrated to the New World, some of whom moved later to New York.

Attempts at settlement were made at an early date on the upper Unadilla River. In 1724, "Squire" Brown and three or four families attempted a settlement near the present village of Unadilla Forks, which was destroyed by Indians the following year. As soon as missionaries like Gideon Hawley, Timothy Woodbridge and Mr. Ashley began their work at Ahwaga in 1753, settlers naturally followed. From the New Hampshire Scotch-Irish settlements came in 1741 the pioneers of Cherry Valley, led by Rev. Samuel Dunlop, to the settlement of Lindsay's Bush, started in 1740 by John Lindsay. Although during the next ten years only four more families came, and though Lindsay gave up his attempt when the French and Indian War threatened, the settlement continued, because no serious hostilities occurred during the French and Indian War, and because Cherry Valley was a place of refuge for people from unprotected localities. In 1762 there were only eight families; yet at the opening of the Revolution the community contained about three hundred persons.

Still other settlements in the upper Susquehanna Valley were begun before the Revolution, within the bounds of the present Otsego County. On the Schuyler patent a settlement was started as early as 1758, which was destroyed during the border

wars. The Herkimer settlement was begun in that year at the foot of Canadurango Lake. About the same time the Tunnicliffe family settled in Richfield, and in 1761 John C. Hartwick attempted a settlement at the foot of Otsego Lake, outside his patent. In Springfield, at the head of Otsego Lake, Nicholas Low took up lands in 1762; three years later Joachim Van Valkenberg settled at the mouth of Schevenus Creek, where he conducted a tavern for pioneers. A few German families took up land in Middlefield in 1767, where an earlier settlement had been started in 1755 by William Cooke and others. Eleazer Wheelock wrote Sir William Johnson in 1762: "I understand that some of our people are about to settle our New Purchase on the Susquehanna River," and begged General Amherst the next year for four townships for an Indian school on that stream. Sir William Johnson reported to General Amherst in 1763 that the Six Nations were sending a delegation to the governor of Connecticut to beg him not to permit his people to settle on the Susquehanna. Johnson had a trading post at Ahwaga, but opposed white occupation.

After the Treaty of Fort Stanwix in 1768, conditions for settlement were more favorable. Land titles, so far as Indian claims were concerned, could no longer be questioned. The danger of war with the French and the Indians was removed. Many new settlers came to the neighborhood of Cherry Valley. Near Springfield, mentioned above, Captain Augustine Prevost built a log house and a sawmill in 1769, and within a short time attracted other settlers to that locality. Between Springfield and Cherry Valley a group of Germans settled, and not far away, at Middlefield, twelve more families located. A few German families from the Mohawk settled on Staley's second tract and adjoining patents in 1765.

George Croghan, in 1769, went to his Otsego property with the purpose of having it surveyed into smaller tracts to be sold

to settlers. With future financial profit in mind, he began a series of improvements including the clearing of land, the construction of two houses and a bridge near Oak Creek. But he became too deeply involved, and was forced to give a mortgage to William Franklin, governor of New Jersey, for a loan of £3,000 to secure title to his lands. Unable to meet his mortgage and interest payments, he was forced in 1770 to sell 152,000 of his 250,000 acres in the Cherry Valley section, and 65,000 acres of his Otsego tract. Yet he still retained 9,000 acres in Cherry Valley and part of the Otsego tract. Another mortgage, given in 1770 for the further security of the aforementioned £3,000, plunged Croghan into deeper financial difficulties. On March 23, 1773, judgment was obtained against him in the supreme court of New York in connection with these mortgages. In consequence, being unable to sell land to actual settlers, he gave over the remaining part of the Otsego tract to William Cooper and Andrew Craig of Burlington, New Jersey. Both Cooper and Craig at once began developing the land for sale. Cooper laid out Cooperstown, built Otsego Hall, and made a fortune by the sale of his land.

Col. Staats Long Morris, by 1770, had located settlers on his patent, among whom were some Frenchmen. To the Harper patent the entire Harper family came from Cherry Valley in 1771, and founded Harpersfield. The village of Edmeston was started about 1770 by Colonel Edmeston, a former English officer, who, for his services in the French and Indian War, received a large land grant. Near the mouth of Otsego Creek, Henry Scramling, with the Young and Alger families, established a settlement in 1772. The same year, Rev. William Johnston founded a settlement just south of Unadilla Forks; and some Scotch-Irish pushed down the valley and formed a settlement called Albout (also Ouleout—later Wattle's Ferry) at the mouth of Ouleout Creek. In 1773, Ebenezer Knapp, from

Dutchess County, settled on Butternut Creek. The group of settlements on this creek were long known as the "Old English District." In the same year, Increase Thurston and Benjamin Lull settled in New Lisbon.

Though the list is incomplete, it is sufficient to show that even during the French wars the population of what was then western New York continued to increase. Before the last war, military posts had been established at Lindesay's Bush and Springfield. These, together with Fort Plain, Fort Schuyler and Fort Stanwix, served to protect the province from French invasions. After the close of the war and the Treaty of Fort Stanwix, an annually increasing number of pioneers, hearing of the fertility of central New York, came to the Susquehanna Valley. Thriving farming communities were established from Otsego Lake to the Unadilla River. In 1771, the white population of New York was estimated at about 150,000; of this number, the area of Tryon County, formed in 1772, which included all of eight present-day counties and parts of three others, contained more than 10,000 white persons.

THE VALLEYS DURING THE REVOLUTION

The outbreak of the Revolution, however, put an end to the progress of settlement in the Susquehanna-Delaware area. Sir William Johnson died on July 11, 1774. Had he lived longer, the attitude of the Indians toward the white settlers, and the procedure of the war in the Susquehanna and Delaware Valleys might have been different. The purpose of the Indians, especially of the Mohawks, on entering the war, was to secure redress of land grievances. Since the conclusion of the Treaty of Fort Stanwix, there had been continuous trouble over lands around the Mohawk villages. The Mohawks claimed that they were unfairly used and that through the treaty they were robbed of their

rights. Sir William Johnson sincerely attempted to remedy this condition, but without success. In November, 1775, a number of Indian chiefs, including the Mohawk, Joseph Brant, visited London. Before Lord George Germain, who later had charge of the war in America, Brant made two speeches regarding the Mohawk land grievances. Through a promise that England would redress these grievances, Germain secured the allegiance of Brant to the British cause, and thereby became responsible for the destructive policy of the Indians during the war.

On the part of the British, however, the military activities in the Susquehanna and Delaware Valleys were a part of an organized campaign. The Hudson Valley was the key to the American defense. By striking at the settlements of the Susquehanna Valley, it was planned to weaken Washington from the rear and to induce him to withdraw some of his troops from the defense of the Hudson to protect the frontier settlements.

It was but natural that the Indian nations should decide as they did in the Revolution. Sir William Johnson's influence with them had always encouraged an alliance of English and Iroquois. The effect of that influence; the desire, especially on the part of the Mohawks, to secure redress, or to avenge themselves for land grievances; their alliance with the English against the French in the fourth intercolonial war; and the promises made by the British government, especially that to Joseph Brant on his visit to England, brought the Six Nations, with the exception of the Oneidas and Tuscaroras, to the British side.

Their defeat at the Battle of Oriskany, in 1777, fostered the desire for revenge among the Iroquois, especially among the Senecas. For five years, border wars laid waste the valleys of the Mohawk, Schoharie, Susquehanna and Delaware. The greater part of the four nations who were allies of the English, formed with the Tories an independent military organization that carried on its activities in the northern and western parts of the

province. In vain the settlers repeatedly petitioned the authorities for protection and assistance. The American plans of war gave but little consideration to the interior settlements. Because the Hudson Valley was the key to the military situation, the frontier was generally left to protect itself as best it could, with the assistance of a few companies of militiamen. Some aid, however, was furnished. After a company of rangers organized by Robert McKeen, of the village, had been ordered to remove from the Cherry Valley settlement because no attack occurred, a company of rangers under Captain Winn was sent there in 1776. Count Pulaski, with his cavalry, was sent to Minisink and remained there during the winter of 1778-79, and Colonel Van Cortlandt's regiment was sent to Warwarsing. But the assistance provided was far from adequate. The desolation of the valleys of the Mohawk, Schoharie and Susquehanna followed. Wyoming, Minisink and Cherry Valley bear witness to the attempts by the British to draw the Americans away from the Hudson.

Finally, in 1779, Washington took action in connection with these activities by organizing the Sullivan-Clinton campaign to clear the Susquehanna Valley of unfriendly Indians, and to punish them for their depredations by destroying their villages and property. The expedition traversed a wide range of territory, as has been shown in a previous volume, and included that portion of central and southern New York lying between the eastern branch of the Susquehanna and the Genesee Rivers. The soldiers from six states became aware of the rich soil in the valleys, the abundance of springs, the ready access by water to seaboard markets, the valuable timber and the excellent water power. South-central New York became better known to the white man than ever before.

Defensive, not offensive, warfare was what the Susquehanna Valley needed. The establishment of definite military power at strategic points throughout the area east and south of the Fort

Stanwix Treaty line might have meant safety to the frontier and continued development to the Susquehanna Valley. But such action was never taken. As a result of the Sullivan-Clinton campaign, the Indians' spirit of revenge was strengthened. Still further devastation of the white settlements followed, especially in the Mohawk and Schoharie Valleys. Though practically nothing remained in the Susquehanna Valley to be destroyed, yet, since it was a natural highway to the north and the east, the marauding bands continued to pass over it as before.

After the border wars, the valleys of the Susquehanna and Delaware were practically depopulated. No other part of the province had become such a scene of desolation. Ruin marked the sites both of former Indian villages and of the white men's settlements. In a report made to the legislature by the supervisors of Tryon County on December 20, 1781, with the record not yet complete, it was estimated that in Tryon County 700 buildings had been burned, 613 persons had deserted to the enemy, 354 families had been taken captive, and several thousand farms were lying uncultivated. Governor Clinton stated that the wheat destroyed amounted to 150,000 bushels. Tryon County had lost two-thirds of its inhabitants. Of those who remained, 380 were widows and 2,000 were fatherless children.

From a lengthy report made toward the close of the war to General Washington by Col. Marinus Willett concerning conditions in Tryon County, it appears that of the 2,500 militia enrolled in the county there remained not more than 800 able to bear arms, and not more than 1,200 persons to be taxed or assessed for raising men for the public service. In explanation of such great reduction, Colonel Willett stated that one-third of those lost had been killed or made prisoners, one-third had gone over to the enemy, and one-third for the time being had abandoned the county.

Soon after the declaration of peace, the re peopling of the Sus-

quehanna and Delaware area began, and its history became one of prosperous settlements. To the region a great tide of emigration now set in from eastern New York, New England and states to the south. Settlements made before the War of Independence by Scotch-Irish, Germans and other pioneers, and abandoned during the border wars, were revived when peace returned, and their population rapidly increased. For example, the Campbells returned to Cherry Valley, and to the sites of Otego, Unadilla, Richfield and Springfield in Otsego County, and to Harpersfield and Sidney in Delaware County came again various of the earlier settlers, bringing with them new pioneers. Some purchased lands from patent holders who had never settled their grants. Others bought from the original pioneers and rebuilt earlier settlements. Settlements of but little importance before the Revolution became flourishing and important communities. From the close of the Revolution date the culture and advancement that have developed and continued steadily to the present.

Prior to the War of Independence, the Germans in the Mohawk and Schoharie Valleys, and the Scotch-Irish on the upper Susquehanna and in the northeastern section, were the predominating races of central New York. But immediately following the war, there came from New England such numbers of immigrants of English ancestry that in both central and western New York they became the leading pioneers.

Among those returning to the abandoned settlements were also many Tories, who were none too warmly welcomed by their Whig neighbors. A case in point is the meeting of the principal inhabitants of the Mohawk district on May 9, 1783, in which it was voted to ask the settlers of the other districts of Tryon County to join with them in instructing their representatives in Congress not to consent to the repeal of any laws made for the safety of the state against treason, or for the confiscation of

traitors' estates, or to the passing of any new acts for the return of Tories.

The new settlements extended farther west than those established before the Revolution, for, as a result of the Sullivan-Clinton campaign, the Property Line, drawn by the Treaty of Fort Stanwix in 1768 between the lands of the Indians and the whites, was wiped out. Thus the area to the west of the Fort Stanwix Treaty line was opened to the whites.

THE PURCHASE OF INDIAN LANDS AFTER 1783

The settlement of the lands to which the Indians held title after the Treaty of Fort Stanwix was materially aided when the Indians yielded their claims to the government of the United States. The alienation of the territory east of the Property Line had been arranged by that treaty. But the territory west of the Line remained an "indefinite Indian domain" in which no alienation of any considerable portion was made until after the Revolution, when the Indians ceded their lands in that area.

Although, as has been shown, four of the Six Nations had sided with the English in the War of Independence, yet in the treaty of peace Great Britain made no provision for her Indian allies. Consequently those tribes that aided the English were technically at war with the confederacy of the United States. Most of the Iroquois decided that it would be useless to contend longer against the "thirteen fires." A portion, however, among whom was Red Jacket, allegedly prompted by English agents, were for continuing the war by leaguering with the northwestern Indians. Cornplanter, Brant and other influential leaders, however, urged peace, and the council of the moderates prevailed.

With the new inrush of settlers to central and western New York, the question of land titles again arose. It was admitted by the authorities of New York State that title to the land was

originally vested in the Indians. Nevertheless, it was a moot question whether or not the Indians, because of their attitude during the war, had forfeited their claim to all territory. At one time the general opinion of the lawmakers of the state was that they had. However, through the intervention of Washington and Schuyler with the Federal government, and George Clinton with the state government, it was decided that definite agreements should be arranged with the Iroquois concerning the renouncing of their land titles. The task was simplified by the fact that so many of the Iroquois, especially of the Mohawk tribe, had located permanently in Canada during the Revolution. Rev. Samuel Kirkland estimated that the number of Iroquois, together with the Stockbridge and Brothertown Indians in New York, numbered only about 6,000. By a series of treaties with the Six Nations, New York State gradually acquired full jurisdiction over the territory within its boundaries, except for certain small reservations and the tract later ceded to Massachusetts. The first step in the task was taken in April, 1784, when the legislature voted that the governor and a board of commissioners should act as superintendents of Indian affairs. The board associated with them other individuals familiar with Indian customs and habits.

The United States government also took similar action and appointed commissioners with power to treat with the Iroquois for lands bordering on New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio. It was at once apparent that there existed a conflict of authority in the two boards. Governor Clinton attempted to arrange a treaty in 1784, but found the Indians unwilling to treat with the representatives of a single state. Accordingly both state and national commissioners held a council, on October 22, 1784, at Fort Stanwix. A treaty of peace and friendship, the first made by the United States with the Indians, was there concluded with the Six Nations. Oliver Wolcott, Richard Butler and Arthur

Lee represented the national government. Washington and Schuyler desired that leniency be shown the Iroquois, and wished that they be allowed to remain in New York.

The treaty provided that Senecas, Cayugas and Onondagas give up a considerable part of their ancient domain west of the Property Line of 1768, and fixed a boundary that deprived them entirely of their western conquests. The Iroquois agreed to relinquish "all claims to the country lying west of a line beginning at the mouth of Oyowagea Creek, flowing into Lake Ontario, four miles east of Niagara; thence southerly, but preserving a line four miles east of the carrying path, to the mouth of Buffalo Creek; thence to the north boundary of Pennsylvania; thence east to the end of that boundary; and thence south along the Pennsylvania line to the river Ohio." It was further provided that the Iroquois give up their captives and receive in return the government's protection. The treaty also secured for the friendly Oneidas and Tuscaroras the quiet possession of their lands.

In June, 1785, Governor Clinton and other commissioners representing the state of New York, arranged at Fort Herkimer a treaty with the Oneidas and Tuscaroras by which it was provided that the Indians cede all territory between the Unadilla and Chenango Rivers, south of a line drawn east and west between those streams, and north of the Pennsylvania border bounded as follows: "Beginning at the mouth of the Unadilla or Tianaderha River where the same empties into the Susquehanna; thence up the said Unadilla or Tianaderha River ten miles, measured on a straight line; thence due west to the Chenango River; thence southerly down the Chenango River to where it empties into the Susquehanna; . . . thence along the said line to the place of beginning." In return for these lands, the Indians received \$11,500 in money and goods.

Similar treaties were made in subsequent years with the

Oneidas, Onondagas and Senecas whose territory lay outside the Susquehanna Valley, by which the remaining lands of these tribes, with certain reservations, were ceded to New York State. In 1797, the Mohawks, through their agents Joseph Brant and John Deserontyon, relinquished to New York all their claims to lands within the state. Numerous other treaties and concessions followed, by which the Iroquois claims in New York were still further reduced. At Canandaigua, on September 11, 1794, a treaty was concluded between the United States and the Six Nations which had as its purpose the removal of causes of complaint and the establishment of a firm and permanent friendship with the Indians. Both objects were accomplished; the Indian title was extinguished, and the western area of the state in consequence was opened for settlement. Central New York was no longer the frontier.

As settlers pushed westward, civil organization naturally resulted. The ten original counties, formed in 1683 within the present state and named, for the most part, with the titles of the royal family, continued unchanged, except for the Vermont area, until 1772, when two new counties, Charlotte and Tryon, were created from Albany County. Tryon County was named in honor of William Tryon, then governor of the province. Its county seat, through Sir William Johnson's influence, was established at Johnstown. For purposes of government, the new county was divided into five districts. A sixth district of the county, Old England, including lands west of the Susquehanna River, was formed in 1775. Later, in 1780, a seventh section, Caughnawaga, was set off from the Mohawk district. During the War of Independence, Governor Tryon was so unpopular that it was decided in 1784 to change the name of the county to Montgomery, in honor of General Richard Montgomery who fell at the siege of Quebec. In 1788, the boundaries of the then-existing counties of the state were definitely fixed, and Mont-

gomery County was made to include all that part of the state west of Ulster, Albany, Washington and Clinton Counties. In 1789 Ontario County was formed, and in 1791 Hamilton, Herkimer, Otsego and Tioga Counties were created. Tioga County included the territory of the present Chemung, Broome and Chenango Counties, approximately the area between the Preëmption Line on the west (the present west boundary of Chemung County) and the Delaware River on the east, the Pennsylvania boundary on the south, and part of the Military Tract on the north.

DEVELOPMENT AFTER THE REVOLUTION

When Samuel Brown came into this region to treat with the Indians for title to the Boston Purchase, already mentioned, he found two white settlers, also previously mentioned, who caused him considerable difficulty: Amos Draper of Wyoming, Pennsylvania, and James McMaster, of New England. Draper came into the valley in 1782 and established himself as an Indian trader at Chugnutt, an old Indian town at the mouth of the Choconut, on the site of the present village of Vestal, Broome County.

James McMaster, already familiar with the Susquehanna Valley through his service as a soldier in Clinton's army in the Sullivan-Clinton campaign of 1779, came again in 1784 to the valley on a prospecting tour, and fell in with Draper at Chugnutt. As already noted, through their influence with the Indians, the two men were granted by them the tract of land on Owego Creek that later became part of the Boston Purchase. McMaster improved his land and was soon comfortably located on the site of Owego as both farmer and frontiersman. A new settlement was started in which Draper constructed the first house.

The pioneer settlers of Otsego County came mainly from

New England, chiefly Connecticut, and from those sections of New York now included in Columbia and Westchester Counties. The movement of settlers to this region of cheap land was but a part of a general migration affecting New York as far west as Ontario County. Lands were offered at lower prices than in the Mohawk Valley. Hundreds of acres could be obtained by a settler at a nominal cost, if he brought other settlers and founded a colony.

Settlers who originally had come to Wyoming, Pennsylvania, from Connecticut, came to Tioga County because of the dispute between Connecticut and Pennsylvania over the right of possession. John McQuigg, who with James McMaster was one of the original patentees of the half township in which the village of Owego is located, settled there in 1785. Another party came from the east by way of Otsego Lake and the Susquehanna River, and settled at Owego. A settlement was made at Apalachin contemporaneously with Owego. In the same year, Samuel and William Ransom came to the town of Tioga. In 1787, Emanuel Coryell, agent of Col. Robert Lettice Hooper, started the village of Nichols.

In 1790, the proprietors of the Boston Ten Towns engaged Amos Patterson and Col. David Pixley to resurvey the whole tract of the Ten Towns, in order to correct errors in the original survey. Among those assisting them were Capt. Abram Brown and David Willson. Attracted by the rich soil of the section, Brown and Willson, upon returning to their home in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, decided to locate on the Susquehanna. Accordingly David Willson, Daniel Ball, Capt. Abram Brown and Capt. Isaac Brown, returned from New England, went up the valley of Owego Creek, and in 1791 located at Newark Valley and Berkshire. Prior to the completion of the Watkins and Flint purchase on June 25, 1794, Capt. Joel Smith, assisted by Isaac Judd, was employed by Watkins to survey a portion of the

land and divide it into lots. He completed the map in October, 1793, and returned home to Berlin, Connecticut. The men intending to settle in the surveyed section "drew" for their lots of 104 acres each, for which they paid seven shillings New England currency, and then, by way of Owego, Elijah Smith, Collings Luddington, Thomas Hollister and Job Judd came to the site where the village of Candor now stands. Some Onondaga Indians, who were there, soon left. The settlement at Spencer was made in 1794 by Benjamin Drake and Joseph Barker, the latter from Wyoming, Pennsylvania. By 1800, the population of Tioga County numbered nearly 7,000. Industries developed until by 1810 there were 289 looms, 7 tanneries, and 29 distilleries.

The first reduction of the territory of Tioga County was made in 1798, when Chenango County was created from Tioga and Herkimer Counties. The new county included the Twenty Towns, the "Gore" lying between the Twenty Towns and the Military Tract, the Hooper patent of 16,000 acres, the "Vermont Sufferers' patent" of 40,960 acres, the Livingston tract of 16,000 acres, the French tract, the Chenango Triangle tract, and other sections. Settlers came from eastern New York, Vermont and Connecticut. In 1785, pioneers from Connecticut and Vermont settled at Bainbridge, and the following year at Afton. Coventry was settled in 1785 by Simon Jones, Oxford by Elijah Blackman in 1788, and Columbus by Colonel Converse and others in 1791. An interesting attempt at settlement was made at Greene in 1792, by a band of French refugees, supposedly from Philadelphia. From Malachi Treat and William M. Morris, patentees, they purchased a tract of 15,835 acres on the east side of the Chenango River, which was divided in 1792 into about 150 parcels of various sizes, exclusive of the French village plot. The death of the leader, Charles Felix de Bulogne, in 1795, and inability to make payments on the land, caused the break-up of

the colony and the reversion of the title to the original patentees. The majority of the colonists left in 1796 and founded a settlement in Bradford County, Pennsylvania.

Only the mere mention of some of the later settlements is possible. In 1787, Ezekiel Wheeler located in the town of Guilford, and in the same year the town of Preston was formed. Avery Power settled in Norwich in 1788. In 1790 Daniel Scribner started Unadilla, and Benjamin Hovey located at Oxford. Settlements were begun in 1792 by Joseph Porter at Smyrna and by S. Ketcham at Chenango Forks. Some New England families in 1793 formed a community at Sherburne. In 1794, a few French families settled in Plymouth; Wilson and Schuyler founded Pitcher; and Joseph Lathrop and A. Mead located at North Norwich. Nathaniel Locke and others settled at Macdonough in 1795. In 1796 Lincklaen was settled. Through the work of John Randall and Robert Lytle respectively, Pharsalia and Smithville were founded in 1797. Ebenezer Hill settled Otselic in 1800.

In 1806 Broome County was created from Tioga County and named for Lieutenant Governor John Broome. John Doolittle, of Connecticut, located near Windsor in 1785 and was the first settler in this region. The Indian village of Ahwaga, noted as Sir William Johnson's trading post, a center of missionary work and a Tory rendezvous during the Revolution, was entirely destroyed during the war. Not until after the treaty of 1785 with the Oneidas and Tuscaroras was a permanent settlement made at this point by a pioneer from Connecticut, named Nathaniel Cole, who in 1785 founded a small settlement named Colesville, near Windsor. Amos Draper and others, chiefly from New England, settled the town of Union. After the purchase, in 1786, by William Bingham and partners of the patent of 30,600 acres from New York State, Capt. Joseph Leonard came into the valley in 1787 and settled on the site of present Binghamton. On

his way up the Susquehanna, Leonard found James Lyon and family already residing on the Bingham patent. Tradition states that Leonard joined with Amos Draper, the Indian trader, in obtaining the ninety-nine-year lease from the Indians of a square mile, in return for an annual rental of a barrel of corn. On a portion of the Bingham tract already mentioned, called Bingham's patent, Joshua Whitney, legally accredited agent, in August, 1800, began laying out streets for a town which Bingham hoped would become a thriving community, a settlement at first called Chenango Point, and later Binghamton. In the same year, Sanford was settled by William McClure, Whitaker and Capt. Nathan Dean. In the following year, Fenton was settled by Elisha Pease, and Conklin by Ralph Lathrop, Waples Hance and others. Whitney's Point, in the town of Triangle, was established in 1791 by Gen. John Patterson, of Massachusetts. Simeon Rogers, John Allen, Asa Beach and Sol Rose, of Connecticut, in 1792 settled Barker. In 1793, Nanticoke was founded by Philip Counselman and John Beachette of Pennsylvania, and Henry Stoddard of Connecticut.

Chemung County was formed from Tioga County in 1836. Among the early settlements were Big Flats, founded by Christopher Miner, of Pennsylvania, in 1787; Southport, by David Griswold, in 1787, and Abraham Miller, in 1789; Ashland, by Green Bentley, in 1788; Chemung, in 1788; Elmira, by Col. John Hurdy and Christopher Loop, in 1788; Horseheads, in 1789, by John Breese and several families from New Jersey; and Van Etten, in 1795, by Alexander and Benjamin Ennis and others from New Jersey.

From Ulster and Otsego Counties, Delaware County was organized in 1797. As in the case of the area along the Susquehanna, there were pre-Revolutionary settlements in this section. In 1762, the Dutch from Hurley explored and settled the east branch of the Delaware River, but were driven out by the Indi-

ans during the border wars of the Revolution. Timothy Gregory and others, of Westchester County, located on the east side of the Delaware in 1766. Harpersfield was settled in 1771, after the survey made by Col. John Harper and David Hendry. Colchester was settled in 1774; Hamden in 1779, by David Harrower, of New England; Andes and Delhi in 1784-85 (the latter town by Abel and John Kidder), by Scotch and Dutch; Franklin, by Sluman Wattles, of New England; Deposit, by Peter Hynback in 1785; and Fairfield in 1789, by twenty Connecticut families.

Sullivan County was created from Ulster in 1809 and named in honor of Gen. John Sullivan. Before the Revolution, Germans had settled in Mamakating, in 1700, and at Neversink, in 1743. In 1775, Germans formed communities at Fallsburgh, Lumberland, Forestburgh and Cohecton. The war destroyed these settlements. In 1793, Liberty was settled by Stephen Russell. Most of the other towns of the county were settled in the early nineteenth century.

The total population of the province of New York in 1701 was 30,000. By 1790, the number had increased to 340,120 whites and Negroes. By 1800, there were 94,000 whites in the state, west of the Hudson River, of which number 17,534 dwelt within the area of the nine counties of the Susquehanna-Delaware Valleys: Otsego, Tioga, Broome, Cayuga, Chemung, Chenango, Delaware, Orange and Sullivan. By 1850, that total had risen to 314,750. The population of the Susquehanna-Delaware area had increased seventeen fold during the decades from 1790 to 1850. For an interval of only sixty years, that increase was indeed remarkable.

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THE FRONTIER PUSHED WESTWARD

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THE FRONTIER PUSHED WESTWARD

FIXING BOUNDARIES AND CLEARING TITLES

AT THE close of the Revolutionary War, most of the state of New York, within its present boundaries, was unsettled. In colonial days the pioneers, after occupying the Hudson Valley, had pushed their way up the Mohawk; some of the more hardy had occupied outlying districts like Cherry Valley, the Schoharie Valley, and the upper regions of the Susquehanna. At their best, however, these settlements outside the Hudson and Mohawk regions had been scattered and thin. With the border warfare during the Revolution they almost disappeared. The opening and settlement of the western districts was the work of the half century after the war.

What exactly were the limits of this wilderness to be won for civilization? No one at the close of the war was quite sure. The patents of 1664 and 1674 to the Duke of York could be interpreted as fixing the westward boundary at the Delaware River. Governor Tryon seems to have accepted that limit. On the other hand, it was generally recognized as early as 1684 that the Six Nations of Indians were dependents of New York. Had not the state, through the Revolution, fallen heir to all their lands westward to Detroit? Such a claim of course would fall foul of equally pretentious claims of other states to those westward regions. Fortunately this fertile ground of controversy was definitely limited when, in 1780, New York surrendered to the national government all its claims to lands west of a line passing through the western limits of Lake Ontario. But where would this fix the boundary south of Lake Erie? No one knew until nine years later, when Andrew Ellicott surveyed the line for the Federal government, fixing it as it has since remained.

There was fortunately no question of the international

boundary along the Great Lakes, nor of the line separating the state from Pennsylvania, which was surveyed and marked in 1786-87. Within the limits thus indicated, however, New York's claims were not undisputed. The controversy with Massachusetts has already been recounted. Soon a less important but interesting dispute arose with Connecticut.

Connecticut's charter of 1662 bounded the colony on the north by Massachusetts Plantation and on the west by the Pacific Ocean. Though these charter rights had given rise to Connecticut's claims in what is now Ohio, and had caused a violent dispute with Pennsylvania which was settled in the latter's favor only in 1782, statesmen at Hartford had not been inclined to assert them as against New York. In 1795, two enterprising citizens of Connecticut, having discovered that Connecticut's northern boundary lay somewhat above the forty-second degree of latitude, concluded that, in spite of the loss to Pennsylvania of lands south of that line, the state's rights were still good to a strip of land $2\frac{1}{3}$ miles wide and 220 miles long, running westward from the Delaware River along the northern boundary of Pennsylvania. This meant, of course, a claim to land heretofore universally recognized as within New York State. Jeremiah Halsey and Edward Ward, who had made this discovery, now offered in return for a grant of the strip to complete the Connecticut statehouse, which an empty treasury had left half finished. Unable to resist such a temptation, the Connecticut legislature, on June 5, 1795, surrendered to Halsey and Ward all its claims to the disputed territory. Halsey then bought out Ward's interest and, having formed with others the Connecticut Gore Land Company, prepared to sell and grant deeds to these lands.

The New York legislature, indignant and somewhat frightened by this movement, by the act of March 11, 1796, ordered the governor to take stern measures against any who should dare

to settle under purchases from the Gore Land Company. Suits were soon brought to test the title in the Federal circuit court for the Connecticut district. Though actual trial of the cases was repeatedly postponed, the rulings of the judges seemed to foreshadow a decision in favor of the Connecticut company. The latter was so elated that it refused an offer of \$300,000 for its rights, demanding nearly double that amount. No decision had been reached when the *dénouement* came in 1800.

Connecticut, in 1786, had ceded to the United States all her claims to lands west of a line parallel to, and one hundred and twenty miles beyond, Pennsylvania's western boundary. In 1795 she had sold to a group of her own citizens the Western Reserve, retaining the jurisdiction over this portion of what is now Ohio. The residents wished this jurisdiction transferred to the Federal government, and in 1797 Connecticut offered to make the transfer. Congress, after earlier refusals, passed an act in April, 1800, agreeing to acknowledge Connecticut's right to the soil in the Western Reserve, if Connecticut by legislative act would renounce all jurisdiction and territorial rights west of the eastern boundary of New York State. The Federal act, though nominally concerning only the Western Reserve, was so worded, perhaps through New York influence, that the renunciation would cover both the Reserve and the Gore. The Connecticut legislature, disregarding the interests of the Gore Land Company, accepted the Federal terms in May, 1800. So vanished the Connecticut Gore and all further opposition to New York's claims along the Pennsylvania border.

Quite as important for New York's interests as a settlement of conflicting claims with neighboring states was the liquidation of the ill-defined rights of the Indians. The Line of Property fixed by the Treaty of Fort Stanwix in 1768 had left the Iroquois in undisputed possession of the region to the westward. No provision for the Indians, however, was made in the peace

treaty at the end of the Revolutionary War. Many New Yorkers hoped that the opportunity would be used to clear the state of all the native tribes, or at least of those who had sided with Great Britain in the war. Such a procedure, however, seemed impracticable, and all the more after the treaty of Fort Stanwix, made in October, 1784, where the Federal commissioners induced the Six Nations to surrender all their lands outside the bounds of New York and Pennsylvania, "securing" them meanwhile in the peaceful possession of their remaining lands except for a tract about Fort Oswego. Such securing did not, of course, preclude purchases from the Indians by either or both of the two state governments. Indeed, hardly had the Federal commissioners completed their treaty at Fort Stanwix before representatives of Pennsylvania concluded a second treaty, extinguishing the entire Iroquois land ownership within their state except for one small reservation. New York was somewhat slower, but by 1790 had succeeded in buying all the Indian lands east of the Preëmption Line in the Cayuga Lake region, save for certain reservations. At Fort Herkimer, on June 26, 1785, the Oneidas and Tuscaroras sold their lands between the Unadilla and the Chenango; at Fort Stanwix, on September 12, 1788, the Onondagas ceded most of their lands; at the same place, on September 22, 1788, the Oneidas sold the rest of their lands except for one reservation; in 1789 it was the turn of the Cayugas, and at Albany, on February 25, they ceded all their lands except a reservation of 100 square miles. Meanwhile, as will later appear, one-third of the lands beyond the Preëmption Line, awarded to Massachusetts, had been freed from the Indian rights in 1788. The remainder was bought by Robert Morris in 1797. By the end of the century the once formidable Iroquois were confined to a few unimportant reservations; the whole of central and western New York was open to the settlement of the white man.

THE MILITARY TRACT

While a few venturesome pioneers were pushing their way into the upper Mohawk regions, even before those lands had been freed from the Indian rights, the state was preparing to open for settlement the lands farther south, about the Finger Lakes. As already told in Vol. IV, page 21, both state and nation had pledged land bounties to those who had served in the armies of the United States, and the state had set aside for this purpose a tract in central New York of over 1,500,000 acres, popularly known as the "Military Tract." The veterans at the end of the war were eager for their reward and the government sought to satisfy them speedily, but the lands had first to be freed from the Indian rights. Clinton tried in vain to buy these in 1784. Then to satisfy the more clamorous, the "Old Military Tract" was set aside in the northern part of the state. As the soil in that region was considered much inferior to that in central New York, the veterans preferred to await allotments to the southward. It was only after the treaties with the Onondagas and the Cayugas in 1788 and 1789 that the state was free to carry out its promise, though even then considerable time was needed to effect the surveys into proper-sized lots. During the years 1789 and 1790, the work was completed and twenty-five townships were laid out, later supplemented by three others. Designated at first by numbers, they were shortly required to bear the somewhat incongruous names of Cato, Pompey, Dryden and of other ancient and modern worthies. Responsibility for the names cannot be determined even today, though there is reason to assume that Robert Harpur, assistant secretary of state and a former schoolmaster, had a hand in it.

On New Year's Day, 1791, balloting for lots began. Theoretically the procedure should have been simple, each man taking his turn and receiving the land awarded him by lot. Instead, al-

most hopeless confusion resulted. Fraud was extensively practiced, many men without military service received grants, while others, rightly entitled to a bounty, had difficulty in substantiating their claims. Some veterans who had wearied of waiting for the allotment and had sold their rights, in some instances for absurdly small sums, now appeared demanding their bounty. Still others reached their lots only to find them occupied by squatters. The situation eventually became so serious that, upon request of the inhabitants of the Military Tract, the legislature in 1797 appointed commissioners with power to examine conflicting claims and make legal settlement of them, and in this manner by 1803 the title difficulties were overcome. A considerable population of native New Yorkers was brought into the region, most of whom, however, did not represent families of soldiers in the late war. Settlement through subdivision and resale of the large lots was undoubtedly retarded by the evil reputation for uncertain titles which the Military Tract had acquired. What was loss to the Military Tract was gain to the lands once owned by Massachusetts, lying just to the westward. To these we must now turn.

THE PHELPS-GORHAM PURCHASE AND THE LESSEES

There must have been at least approximate justice in the decision reached at Hartford in December, 1786, between New York and Massachusetts, by which the former retained political jurisdiction westward to Lake Erie and the latter gained recognition of her ownership of the soil, for it left the die-hards on both sides thoroughly dissatisfied. Numerous New Yorkers talked of betrayal by their delegates, and could not be consoled by reflection on the imperial proportions of their state, with its recently defined boundaries. Of what use an empire, if its very soil were the property of foreigners? Where in

such a case can the bold trader, the enterprising land speculator, find his advantage? Meanwhile, in Boston the agreement was up for ratification in the legislature, and here too there was talk of betrayal. One Oliver Phelps of the Berkshires, master trader in provisions generally, insisted New York was getting land to which it had no right. Regardless of such outbursts on both sides, the agreement was accepted by the two legislatures in the spring of 1787. New York had the imperial borders; Massachusetts the broad and fertile acres within. Under the circumstances, the next move in the settlement of the region was to be looked for at Boston.

To the more cautious, conservative leaders of the commonwealth, the situation appeared one of distinctly providential making. The state government was overwhelmed with debt, but who could doubt that its resources of wild lands, both to the eastward and westward, were sufficient to meet its obligations? It was only necessary to husband these resources; then in the fullness of time, and with the growth of population, would come the moment to dispose of them with a rich increase. But it was no group of cautious conservatives who had just made a successful rebellion against Britain. Husbanding of resources made no appeal to creditors of a state whose treasury was so empty that even its commissioners at Hartford could not be paid. When the state's bonds were selling at a discount of over 75 per cent, speedy sale of these wild lands seemed imperative. A large group of hungry land speculators, some of them with seats in the General Court, joined in the demand for such action. The chorus was swelled by the more timorous voices of men who feared the expense of protecting the lands against intruders and adjusting the ever-recurring difficulties with the Indians. Indeed the commonwealth had to plead poverty in declining New York's invitation to a highly desirable conference with those Indians in the summer of 1787. Even these considerations

might not have led at once to the opening of western New York to settlement, had there not appeared a movement which threatened to deprive the commonwealth of its entire territory in the Genesee. This was John Livingston's famous project of a perpetual lease from the Indians of all central and western New York.

The first intimation of this alarming scheme to reach Boston was in a letter from Governor Clinton to Governor Hancock early in August, 1787. Clinton at the time had only incomplete evidence of "a private and clandestine negotiation with the native Indians"; before the end of the year, the nature and extent of the project became known, and now appear in the documents in Hough's *Proceedings of the Commissioners of Indian Affairs*. Whether or not he was the originator of the scheme, John Livingston, of Livingston Manor, was certainly its most active promoter. A short service as Indian commissioner had given him an official relationship with the natives upon which he now determined to trade. Livingston was an intelligent and well-informed man of affairs; he undoubtedly was aware that the state constitution forbade private treaties with, and purchases from, the Indians. But there was a clever and easy way of getting around the law. A thousand-year lease would give him effective control of the land; his fortune, and those of his partners, would be made. An unscrupulous scheme certainly, but except for its boldness not greatly different from a hundred others imagined, and on occasion effected, by the speculative elements in early America. The promoters of such schemes usually counted that at the worst they could force their opponents to buy them off at a price high enough to make the enterprise profitable.

Livingston gathered around him some eighty associates, mostly from Columbia County, including a number of his relatives. They were known as the New York Genesee Com-

pany. His most active assistants were Dr. Caleb Benton and Ezekiel Gilbert. These leaders were about ready to treat with the Indians, perhaps indeed had already assembled them, when they learned that Samuel Street, John Butler, John Johnson, and other British citizens of Canada, had combined with Benjamin Barton, an American, to form the Niagara Genesee Company which, like its counterpart on the Hudson, intended to get a long lease for a large block of land from the Indians. The Niagara Company included a number of men of great influence with the Indians, men able, if they wished, to block Livingston's scheme. Under the circumstances, a merger seemed to be indicated. Livingston, in return for the assistance of the British with the natives, agreed to give them a share of the booty—what share the records do not show, but apparently not large.

Speed was now essential, for the New York officials were aroused to the danger and were preparing to avert it. Livingston lost no time in completing his task. At Kanadasaga (Geneva), on November 30, 1787, Livingston, by a combination of threats and cajolery, induced some forty-seven chiefs to lease him and his associates for a period of 999 years all the property of the Six Nations west of the Line of Property. The only exceptions were certain tracts which the Indians might reserve. Livingston agreed to pay \$20,000 within a few months and an annual rental of \$2,000. Brant claimed the Indians would never have agreed to such a transaction without the influence of Cornplanter, who had been heavily bribed, as is set forth in the *Pickering Papers*, XXXV, 133. Such an enormous tract might have satisfied another man, but not Livingston. The Indians still had something to dispose of and Livingston intended to get it. On January 8, 1788, he signed a similar lease with the chiefs of the Oneidas, covering most of their land, which lay to the eastward of the Line of Property. The total territory comprised in both leases, according to Livingston's opponents,

amounted to twelve million acres, two-fifths of the entire surface of the state.

The second lease was hardly signed before Livingston found himself a veritable storm center in the legislature. He and his associates had deliberately defied the state officials, who were preparing to buy part of these lands from the Indians. There were men in the legislature willing to hang them as traitors. There were enough others, however, members of the New York Genesee Company or friends of such members, to insure the lessees a fair hearing. Livingston with rare aplomb—brazen effrontery, his opponents said—claimed that he had performed a patriotic service (*New York Daily Advertiser*, February 29, 1788). He had found the Indians about to dispose of their lands to aliens; by his deft management he had saved the situation, thereby procuring the most solid advantages to his country. The majority of the legislature could easily perceive the solid advantages which might accrue to John Livingston and his associates; with little hesitation they ruled that the leases were in reality purchases, and in consequence were invalid. The governor was instructed to take measures to circumvent the lessees. Livingston's game was obviously not prospering, but it was not yet up. The courts had not yet decided against him, and he had no intention of abandoning the enterprise.

In Boston, meanwhile, plans for the sale of the western lands were going forward rapidly. To the motives for a speedy sale already mentioned was now added the fright occasioned by Livingston's leases. These might well be a foretaste of the difficulties in store for Massachusetts if it elected to hold its western lands for an increase in market value. An immediate disposal of them seemed the more prudent course; the purchaser then could relieve the state of all expense involved in fighting the lessees, and this expense now promised to be large for there was a rumor that Livingston was preparing to settle a small army

of Shays' men on the disputed land and to hold it by force thereafter.

Committees in both houses were appointed to consider offers for purchase. Of these there were plenty, some asking for modest blocks out of the state's huge holdings, others more ambitious, and a few embracing the entire territory. Among the latter was an offer from two bold operators, Oliver Phelps and Nathaniel Gorham, who seemed capable of carrying through such a huge enterprise. Phelps, a Connecticut man who had settled in the Berkshires shortly before the Revolution, had made a modest fortune as a general merchant and trader. During the war he had played a prominent part in civilian service as state purchasing agent of army supplies. Both during and after the war he held political office in his state, sitting for a time in the Senate and again in the governor's Council. A tireless traveler, physically indefatigable, mentally and morally resilient, his mind was full of ingenious combinations and resourceful expedients; his none too scrupulous deals crossed and recrossed, following and combining with one another in bewildering succession. A bold, daring operator who, while he did not despise a few pounds' profit in a cattle deal, could coolly plan a land speculation running possibly into a million dollars. Gorham was a less colorful, but more "respectable," figure. Like Phelps he had gained a small fortune by his own efforts, but he had lived on the seaboard where he had associated with many of the aristocrats of his state. Only the previous summer, as one of Massachusetts' delegates at Philadelphia, he had helped to make the new Federal Constitution, and now he was seated in the governor's Council—a not unfavorable place from which to negotiate a purchase from the commonwealth. During the previous session, Gorham had proposed to buy a million acres of the Genesee lands. It is quite probable that his offer would have gone no higher had not Phelps come forward with one of his

"combinations." Phelps saw in Gorham and his friends his most formidable rivals. Why not pool their interests with those of his own group? There would thus be no wild bidding up of the selling price, and the combined resources of the two groups would make possible an offer for the entire Genesee at a proportionally lower figure. Gorham consented and the merger was made.

The sparring and bargaining with the legislative committees which followed was no mere contest of wits between the would-be buyers and the guardians of the state's interest. Another group was at work whose operations at this distance can be but dimly followed. These were the speculators in the state's depreciated bonds, the "consolidated securities," which at the time were selling for but three shillings sixpence in the pound, more than 80 percent below par. Whether Phelps and Gorham then entered into a logrolling agreement with this group, or whether they fell victims to the latter's political finesse, can not now be determined. In any case, when an agreement was at last reached on April 1, 1788, for the sale of the entire Genesee country to Phelps and Gorham, it placed the purchase price at £300,000 Massachusetts currency to be paid in consolidated securities in three annual installments beginning one year after date. As £300,000 represented nearly one-fourth of the outstanding issue, it seemed certain that their elimination from the market would cause a sharp increase in the price of such securities. Phelps and Gorham, however, believing that the price would not rise beyond four shillings in the pound, considered that they had made an excellent bargain. At the then-current price of securities, their contract called for the equivalent of only \$175,000 (the Massachusetts pound was equal to \$3.33), spread over three years. This meant that they were buying the entire Genesee at slightly less than three cents an acre. At that rate they could contemplate with equanimity a moderate rise

in the price of securities. True, they had bought only the preemptive right; it would be necessary to "quiet" the Indian title but that, it was expected, would not be costly.

Small as the purchase price appears now, neither Phelps nor Gorham, nor the two together, could raise such an amount, even with three years' credit. From the beginning of their negotiation with the state, they had the promise of support from various friends. It was now necessary to transform such promises into definite obligations, and then to look for further support. Even before the purchase had been consummated, Phelps and Gorham seem to have agreed to divide the enterprise into 120 shares, of which they would retain for themselves as many as their finances would permit. They wished not over forty or fifty associates.

They now launched their drive for associates. Both wrote innumerable letters to acquaintances in New England, while Gorham undertook to interest a number of capitalists whom he had met during his stay in Philadelphia. It was Phelps, however, who brought in the first large group of recruits, and these, of all men, were the chiefs of the Livingston lessee enterprise. On April 19, 1788, Phelps agreed to merge with them; as appears in the Phelps papers, now in the New York State Library, the lessee group would have twenty-three shares in the Phelps and Gorham enterprise at cost, and in return would agree to surrender their lease, using their influence to secure full title from the Indians at the expense of the Phelps and Gorham associates. Thus prepared, Phelps was ready to deal with the Indians.

With Livingston's assistance, he attempted to assemble the Senecas at Geneva, but without success. The members of the Niagara Genesee Company appearing more influential with the Indians, Phelps arranged with them to bring together a council at Buffalo Creek. Here, with all legal formalities, he made his purchase on July 8, 1788. He was able to persuade the Indians

to part with only a third of the land to which he had bought the preëmptive right from Massachusetts, *i.e.*, the tract between the preëmptive line and the Genesee River, plus about 200,000 acres along the lower course and on the west of that river. For this cession he agreed to pay \$5,000 and an annuity of one-tenth that amount.

Livingston's part in the Indian treaty left Phelps with doubts of the wisdom of his agreement with the New York Genesee Company. His dissatisfaction was shortly increased by the lessees' failure to make payments on their shares as agreed. By the following winter a complete rupture took place. In February, 1789, it was finally arranged that the lessees should surrender their shares and, in recompense for their aid and for some money which they had paid, they should receive four townships in the Genesee. Livingston's operations thereafter are obscure, and must remain so until the records of his organization are brought to light. It appears that, though they were under indictment by the state, he and his associates still believed that they could exploit the leases, at least for those lands not yet sold by the Indians; but nothing came of the attempts if such were made. Soon the lessees were appealing to the state for relief, and in February, 1793, a complaisant legislature voted them a tract ten miles square in the Old Military Tract, in Clinton County. Still not satisfied, Livingston seems to have resolved on a desperate throw. In the fall of the same year he was agitating for a separation of the western counties from New York State, with the hope, it seems, that in the new state he would be able to make something out of his lease for lands the Indians had not yet sold. Livingston failed completely, as he did more than a decade later when he attempted to frighten the Holland Land Company by once again raising the specter of his lease. This completes the story of the lessee episode, save for a later mention of the fortunes of the Niagara Genesee

Company. Aside from the compensation in lands extorted from Phelps and from the state, its most important result was quite unintended. Governor Clinton and his Indian commissioners seem to have used effectively the threat that unprincipled white men might cheat the Indians out of their lands, in order to induce the eastern tribes the more quickly to sell to the state.

In the meantime, Phelps and Gorham had surveyed their lands into a series of ranges and townships, six miles square, on the model of the Federal government's surveys in the Northwest Territory, and were hastening sales as rapidly as possible. When their first payment to the state of Massachusetts was about to fall due, they were having difficulty raising the money. Partners with ready cash were hard to find; some who had joined were, like the lessees, unable to pay their quotas. To make matters worse, there were men in the Massachusetts legislature who seemed to believe that Phelps and Gorham's purchase at such a low price was the result of a corrupt bargain. "Old Adams" (Samuel) was after the rascals' scalps, and he was resolved to use any failure in punctual payment as an excuse for quashing the sale. What had seemed like an easy contract was now proving formidable. Phelps and Gorham had counted on a profitable sale for cash to the state of Pennsylvania, which was eager to acquire the triangular tract that would give it a frontage in the west on Lake Erie. But now the national government was claiming that land for itself, as beyond the bounds of New York, and agreeing to sell it (1788) to Pennsylvania for the enviable sum of \$150,000. Worse than all, Massachusetts' consolidated securities were rising with the prospect of the Federal assumption of the state debts. The bargain of the spring of 1788 had taken on a very different aspect.

Nevertheless, by extraordinary efforts, mostly on the part of Phelps, the first installment was made, or rather security was

posted to insure its payment during the twelve months after it fell due. Evidently "Old Adams," with the support of the enraged speculators in consolidated securities, had failed to avoid concessions to the distressed purchasers. Phelps and Gorham, however, failed to profit by the extension of time for their payments. They were unable to make their payments as agreed, and were consequently forced to come to a compromise with the state. On March 5, 1790, they agreed to surrender to the state the two-thirds of their purchase not yet freed from the Indian rights. A clause in the contract of surrender provided that the state might grant them a share in the returned lands, in case it should elect to use their services in securing the Indian title and making the surveys, but the state eventually decided not to exercise this option. There remained only the question of the final payment by Phelps and Gorham on the lands they retained. This was settled by an agreement of June 7, 1791, in which Phelps and Gorham were given the privilege of paying the balance of their debt in specie, and the equivalent of the amount due in consolidated securities was fixed at six shillings to the pound. The previous year they had sold to Robert Morris all but two townships of their remaining lands in the Genesee (about a million and a quarter acres). Even with the returns from this sale, Phelps and Gorham found difficulty in meeting their obligation to the state. The matter dragged on for years before it was settled.

PULTENEY, MORRIS, AND THE HOLLAND LAND COMPANY

In the meantime, Morris had succeeded in reselling at great advantage the lands bought from Phelps and Gorham. The purchasers were Sir William Pulteney, John Hornby and Patrick Colquhoun, who became known as the London Associates. This group sent out to manage their lands an enterprising Scotch-

man, Charles Williamson, of whose operations something will be seen on a later page.

Morris' successful venture in Genesee lands encouraged him to buy more in the same region. There was still available the great tract of about four million acres which Phelps and Gorham had relinquished, and he determined to get it. Through his agent, Samuel Ogden, he carried on negotiations with Massachusetts which culminated on March 12, 1791, in a contract for Ogden's purchase of the entire block for £100,000 in specie, *i.e.*, \$333,333. This contract was promptly assigned to Morris. One clause is of interest, for it contains an echo of the lessee affair. Massachusetts reserved from the sale one undivided sixtieth part of the entire tract. The state authorities had learned from Phelps and Gorham that they had deeded to Samuel Street such an amount for the benefit of the Niagara Genesee Company. This was in consideration of the Canadians' aid in getting the Indian cession of 1788 and of their promise of similar aid in freeing the remaining lands of the Indian rights. Morris, not desirous of sharing his purchase, soon bought out the interests of the Niagara Company and, in the summer of 1792, secured from Massachusetts a release of the sixtieth part involved.

In the meantime, he had been busily engaged in finding purchasers for his huge acquisition. For convenience of payment, Massachusetts had given Morris five separate deeds in escrow to as many tracts in his purchase, all of them of about equal size. Morris now decided to reserve for later sale the easternmost tract, on the assumption that it was the most valuable, since it contained much of the rich bottom land along the Genesee River. The eventual disposition of these lands is shown by Orsamus Turner, in his *History of the Holland Purchase* (pp. 397-99). The other four tracts Morris sought to sell in Europe, where large sales for cash could be made more easily than in America. Before the end of July, 1793, he had sold all four tracts, total-

ing about 3,300,000 acres, to a group of Dutch bankers who came to be known as the Holland Land Company. They had earlier joined in the loans placed in Holland by the American government, and had subsequently speculated profitably in American state and Federal bonds. Their purchasing agent in America, Theophile Cazenove, had then aroused their interest in American lands as a speculative field, with the result that besides their huge purchase in the Genesee they had acquired a million and a half acres in Pennsylvania and two small tracts in central New York.

Though the Dutch purchasers would have been glad to commence sales at once, they were forced to wait until the Indian title had been secured. This proved no easy task. Morris had agreed to buy it, but was for a time prevented by the Indian war in the Ohio country, which made negotiations with the Senecas impossible. When the war was over, Morris was in such financial straits that he could not proceed. Only in 1797 was he able to arrange for a treaty, and at Geneseo, in September of that year, he purchased of the Indians all their lands except some considerable reservations. The Holland Company immediately sent out its surveyors, under the direction of Joseph Ellicott, to divide the country into ranges of townships in the same manner as the Phelps and Gorham Purchase had been surveyed. The task was so great that it was completed only during the summer of 1800. Sales to settlers therefore began only in the following year, when Ellicott, appointed agent for the purpose, arrived in the Genesee. He shortly selected the site of Batavia for his headquarters, and here he set up the general land office from which the great Holland Purchase was managed for the next thirty-five years.

Before the Holland Purchase was opened to settlement, the lands purchased by Pulteney and his associates were being developed at a rapid pace under the vigorous management of

Williamson. This newcomer to the backwoods of America was of an optimistic, sanguine temperament. He believed that with sufficient effort on his own part and with generous investments in internal improvements by the proprietors, the Pulteney purchase could soon be made into a highly prosperous district, with most of the conveniences of the old settled districts on the seaboard. Settlers, under these conditions, would hasten to his lands. This would make possible higher prices and hence large profits for the owners. Working on this basis for nearly a decade after his arrival in the Genesee, Williamson spent lavishly the generous funds placed at his disposal. New towns were laid out, notably at Bath and Williamsburg; hotels, mills, stores and even a theater and a race course were provided; aid and encouragement in money and credit were granted to artisans. Nearly a million dollars, it was believed, had been expended in this way by 1800. The expense was ruinous to the proprietors, who had to call a halt at the beginning of the new century. Williamson withdrew in favor of Robert Troup, an agent committed to a less extravagant system. A portion of Williamson's heavy expenditures was wasted, having gone into unproductive improvements in advance of the needs of the settlements. By burdening the enterprise with debts, Williamson seems to have restrained the proprietors later from other needed development expenditures, and by so much to have injured the district. On the other hand, he did give to the Pulteney lands in the early period such an attraction for land seekers that the region was settled with unexampled rapidity.

The financial result of Williamson's system had another sequel of importance for western New York: it convinced the Dutch proprietors of the folly of such a course on their own lands in the Genesee. Their agents on the small tracts about Cazenovia and Barneveld, notably John Lincklaen, at first patterned their methods after those of Williamson. Their expendi-

tures for development purposes by 1800 were so heavy that the Dutchmen were in despair. In consequence, they introduced a very different policy upon their lands in the Genesee and the agency there was begun and continued on the principle that expenditures for development should be held to a minimum. There was to be no "hastening of civilization" on the Purchase. A few main roads might be opened at the expense of the proprietors, some aid might be given for the erection of church buildings, but, beyond that, development of the region must be left to the enterprise of the settlers. The wisdom of this policy is debatable, the more so since most of the land payments made by the settlers were sent over to Holland, instead of being reinvested on the Purchase, as they presumably would have been had the proprietors lived in the region. For the owners it was probably advantageous, and it may have been also for the settlements. Since there was no tendency on the part of the proprietors to monopolize the business opportunities there, private capital may have found the region more attractive than it otherwise would have been.

SETTLEMENTS AND GROWTH IN POPULATION

No brief historical account of such an extensive territory as that included in central and western New York can adequately treat its settlement. The process can only be sketched here in broad outline.

In spite of the fact that the districts beyond the Property Line had been closed to settlement after 1768, they were by no means unknown to the residents in the east. Traders with the Iroquois passed back and forth over the Indian trails, bringing word to Albany and elsewhere of the rich, well-watered lands about the Finger Lakes and in the Genesee. Missionaries to the Indians and soldiers returning from the frontier forts along

the Great Lakes brought further information about these favored regions, and their reputation was growing among the people to the eastward. With the war came the famous Sullivan-Clinton campaign of 1779, in which a goodly number of soldiers penetrated deep into the Genesee, seeing with their own eyes the smiling country known only by hearsay before. No better advertisement of the region could have been devised. Hundreds of families in eastern New York, in New England, and even in Pennsylvania, were resolved to move into the region when once it should be opened for settlement.

Nor must it be forgotten that our ancestors of the eighteenth century were a prolific race. Young people married early and raised large families. The home farms, often far from fertile, were inadequate to support the rapidly increasing population. Accustomed to but little luxury, young couples were prepared to set out with one horse, a few tools, and a slight amount of household gear, to take their chances in the new country. They might have little or no money to pay for their lands, but these could usually be had on long credit. Prospects in the settled districts seemed unattractive; in imagination at least the future on the frontier offered far more. Under the circumstances there was no lack of settlers.

Even before the Indian titles had been extinguished, a few adventurous pioneers had found their way west of the Property Line. Some were squatters who had settled before the Revolution; others were more recent arrivals. As early as 1783, Roswell Franklin, from Pennsylvania, had settled near Aurora, on Cayuga Lake. The next year, Hugh White and his sons had led the way into the lands beyond Old Fort Schuyler, founding the village of Whitestown. Down at Painted Post, the old Indian trading station, William Harris settled in 1786, while Massachusetts and New York were still contending over the title to his lands. Other "lawless" individuals soon followed.

Indeed from 1788, when Phelps began his surveys, and still more from 1791, when the Military Tract was opened, the onrush of settlers was so great that citation of individuals becomes invidious. Large numbers who played a vital part in the clearing of the forest and the opening of the country are nameless for us. They became restless as their neighborhoods began to fill up and sold out their "betterments" to move farther westward, leaving no descendants within the state. Others, who later shaped the history of the region, made up the second wave of settlers, men who bought the "betterments" of the pioneers. Both groups occupy their honored niches in the local halls of fame.

Though the early arrivals had first choice of locations, they by no means monopolized the best. Some of the richest lands in central and western New York were long avoided by the settlers, or, if taken up, were for a time abandoned. The well-founded fear of "swamp fever," or "Genesee fever," kept many a man from the fertile bottom lands. Perhaps this disease was malaria, perhaps typhus fever, perhaps typhoid fever. More probably all three were prevalent, but were not distinguished one from another. Only later did drainage, improved sanitation, and more careful personal hygiene diminish these scourges.

Nor did the pioneer always have a keen eye for the sites which would later grow into cities. Several of the great urban communities of today were slow in settling. True, the sites of Elmira, Geneva, Buffalo, Jamestown and other towns were appreciated from the first, but many of the country districts near Utica were well settled before the locality of the future city became popular. The early development of Syracuse was somewhat retarded by delay in freeing its site from Indian ownership, but even when this had been done the village was slow at first to grow; its very name was a tardy discovery. The falls of the Genesee had been freed from the Indian title in

1788, yet long after Geneva and Canandaigua had become flourishing villages, the future site of Rochester was still unoccupied. Its real establishment came only in 1810. By 1820, it still had but 1,500 inhabitants. Here also swamp fever may have been in part responsible.

What was the origin of this body of settlers which pressed into central and western New York after 1790? Where did they come from? Briefly, from all of the eastern states and from abroad. Oneida County got its first settlers mostly from the Hudson and lower Mohawk Valleys. Close upon their heels came a great increment from that inexhaustible reservoir of man power, New England. But little behind was a sturdy group of Welsh which first settled on the hills north of the Mohawk. Soon these people were found over much of the county. Madison County drew its inhabitants largely from the eastern districts and from New England. Lincklaen, at Cazenovia, made a special effort to attract Yankee axmen and artisans. As was natural from the circumstances of its settlement, the Military Tract drew largely from the eastern part of the state. Soon, however, families from Massachusetts and Connecticut were located throughout the tract. Given the reputation of the Genesee, it was to be expected that settlers would appear there from all the eastern states. If Phelps and Gorham's influence brought in a larger number from Massachusetts than elsewhere, it must not be forgotten that a door to the Genesee opened to the southward. Men from Pennsylvania and others, but in smaller numbers, from New Jersey and Maryland were already moving up the Susquehanna into New York when Williamson undertook, in 1792, to encourage still further their migration, by building a road southward and eastward from Bath. By the time the Holland Purchase was open for settlement, many of the pioneers in central New York, men of various origins, had tired of their locations and now sought better

luck on the Dutch lands. From Vermont came many former residents of Massachusetts and Connecticut, who, after a brief experience, had found the soil too poor in their northern state. There came also many of the younger generation of native Vermonters. Pennsylvanians continued to come into the southern counties, notably Chautauqua, in some numbers. Somewhat later came a body of Rhode Islanders to Allegany County.

The settlers so far mentioned were, with the exception of the Welsh, native born and of English stock. In the thirties and forties of the nineteenth century, simultaneously with the development of railroads in the region, there came large numbers of Irish and German immigrants. Many of the Irish were desperately poor and, as unskilled labor, had at first to accept the heaviest and least-paid jobs. They helped to build the railroads and, crowding into the cities, shortly were manning the newly-built factories. A few Germans were to be found in western New York from the early days. Williamson, and later the Holland Land Company, had brought in a few groups, but the results of their experiments were quite unsatisfactory. Now, unassisted, large numbers of Germans of a better type, largely from Bavaria and Württemberg, came into all the central and western counties. Many settled as farmers; others took up their trades and crafts in the cities. Writing in the middle of the century, Turner estimated that nearly one-third of the population of Buffalo was of German blood. Many more came after the failure of the revolutions in 1849.

The entire movement of settlement can be followed approximately in the census figures. Omitting the counties of Oneida and Oswego, we find that during the first decade of settlement (1790-1800) the districts west of the former Line of Property had received some 60,000 inhabitants. By 1810 the number had grown to nearly 200,000. By 1820 it had

passed the 500,000 mark. A decade later it was over 700,000. In 1840 it was almost 900,000. At mid-century the number had surpassed 1,000,000—three times the total population of the state when the settlement of the west began.

CHANGES IN FRONTIER CIVILIZATION

It was not alone in numbers that the western regions had grown. The infant settlements had now matured and mellowed. The poverty, the isolation, the crudities of the frontier, had given way with the years. Now there was comparative affluence. Turnpikes first, then canals, and finally railroads, had bound the once-distant districts of the frontier to the more advanced centers in the East and, more potently still, had brought the isolated pioneer into closer contact with his fellow men in his own section. Thought was quickened by the more frequent exchange of ideas. Improved postal service, the development of a local press, the spread of popular educational facilities, not the least of which were the district libraries—all these were reshaping the minds of the people. With the heavier tasks of the frontier completed and with capital accumulating, there was leisure now for many to cultivate the amenities of life. Social and economic conditions had gone through a marked evolution in the preceding sixty years. Some aspects of this evolution deserve further, if brief, attention.

Most striking of all were the material changes. As in every new and heavily-wooded country, the first task had been the clearing of the forest. This by 1850 had been in large measure accomplished, at the price, it is true, of great waste. It must be remembered, however, that to the pioneer, chopping for himself a farm, most timber had no value. It was a burden to be rid of as soon as possible. Something might be made from

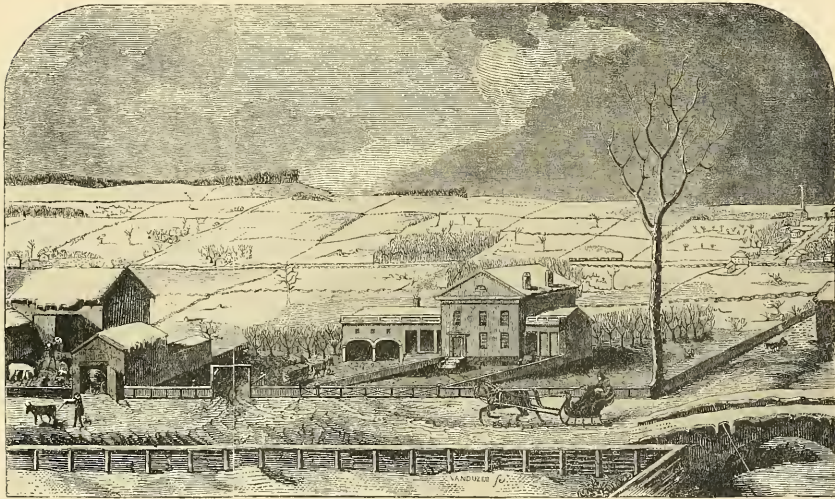
it if one had the equipment and the time to turn it into pot and pearlshes, but it would appear that most of the timber burned in central and western New York was not used for such manufacture.

The pioneers in these districts raised in the earlier years little more produce than they needed for their own consumption. The small excess was consumed by the new settlers, or by men passing through on their way to the westward. With the enlargement of the farms, the profitable disposal of the crops became a serious problem. Production had outgrown the demands of the local market, and transportation charges over miserable roads to the seaboard were prohibitive. This at least was true for all but the easternmost districts of the region. The rich virgin lands produced superb crops of wheat, but after the first decade of settlement little could be got for it. Some was transformed into whiskey, which found a readier local market and which could be transported much more easily. But even the whiskey market could be glutted, and more often than not it actually was. In this dilemma, the farmer naturally turned to the raising of cattle which could be driven to market on the hoof. In the early years, wolves and the shortage of pasture kept the herds small. As the forest was conquered, the wolves retreated; the pastures and the herds expanded. Drovers became an important element in the frontier economy. Unhappily for our New Yorkers, there were many other frontier districts competing for the beef markets to the eastward, and many of these competitors were in warmer climates where the cattle wintered better. Beef raising also left little profit.

The first relief to these hard pressed pioneers, struggling with their debts for land and equipment, came with the War of 1812. Some in the western districts suffered from the attacks of the enemy. For most, the war was a period of high



FOUR STAGES IN THE



MAKING OF A FARM

prices for provisions, which army agents paid for in cash. The boom period lasted until 1818. Then came a depression which was thoroughly broken only with the building of the Erie Canal in the twenties. At last production from central and western New York could be taken cheaply to market. The whole region felt the invigorating influence of the new means of communication, the southern counties much less, it is true, than the others. Cities were growing, whose population offered better local markets for the farmers. Industrial life in the towns began slowly to unfold. All these vivifying influences were still further quickened by the development of railroads in the thirties and forties. And this time the southern counties shared in full measure the good fortune of those to the north, for the Erie Railroad now brought them into close touch with New York. Their isolation and their economic handicaps were gone.

In the meantime, the cultural and religious life of the region was developing also. The New England tradition of the district school reinforced the demand of the native New Yorkers for adequate educational facilities for the mass of the people. The law which created the Military Tract provided that in each township of 60,000 acres, one lot of 600 acres should be set aside for the support of literature in the state, and a second for the support of religion and the common schools—not large support surely, but it was intended merely as assistance, the residents being expected to provide by taxation for the schools and teachers. On both the Pulteney and the Holland Purchase, general promises of aid to education were given by the proprietors. Under Williamson's administration, such assistance was given generously; under his successors less liberally. On the Holland Purchase, aid was limited to the grants of small lots for the school buildings. When in the twenties academies began to be founded, the land agents refused them assistance.

The very fact of early calls upon the proprietors for aid in establishing schools, is a testimony to the settlers' regard for education.

Nor were they satisfied with the rudimentary training the common schools afforded. As soon as they were financially able, groups of settlers combined to found and support private academies. At an early date, such schools were established in Geneva and Canandaigua and shortly after the turn of the century many others were set up. Even these did not carry instruction far enough; shortly there was a demand for institutions of higher learning. In answer to it a number of colleges were soon founded. The first was Hamilton, in 1812, at Clinton. Close to it, in 1819, was founded the forerunner of Colgate University, the Hamilton Literary and Theological Institution, to train men for the Baptist ministry; in 1846 it became Madison University. In the meantime, in 1820, a theological seminary was established at Auburn, for the training of Presbyterian ministers. Two years later the Geneva Academy was transformed into a college; known as Geneva College after 1825, it assumed the name of Hobart in 1852.

The religious life of the region was that of any normal American community. The pious might complain of the roisterous ways of the frontiersman, of his profanity, his heavy drinking and his wild gambling. Hotchkiss thought that in the early years the Sabbath day did not exist beyond the Genesee, and it was true that the active, adventurous pioneer was often regardless of Sunday observance. Unbelief, however, was no more characteristic of the men on the frontier than of any other section of the American people. Religious organizations were established in the earliest days of settlement, well before church buildings or pastoral care could be afforded. Houses of worship were soon provided and ministers were sought in the eastern counties and in New England. As the communities grew,

one of the first cares was provision for the training of pastors. Hence the institutions at Hamilton and at Auburn.

Not all the inhabitants were satisfied with the usual Protestant practice; western New York was a fertile ground for the growth of new religious sects. The "Jemimanites," the Mormons, the spiritualists, and other groups originated or developed in the region. Jemima Wilkinson and her followers were among the very earliest settlers in the region. Beginning in Rhode Island, the "Universal Friend" had gathered her disciples from New England and Pennsylvania. By 1786, she was prepared to lead them into a new land where all might live together in peace, untroubled by doubting and derisive neighbors. An exploring expedition in 1787 led to the selection of the Genesee country for the location of the New Jerusalem. In 1788, the advance guard settled on the western shore of Seneca Lake, near the present village of Dresden. Here in the following year, or in 1790, they were joined by their leader and the remaining disciples. Jemima's endeavor, only partially successful, to impose celibacy upon her followers impeded any growth from within, and her missionary efforts proved unsuccessful. Her group, industrious and well conducted and flourishing during her lifetime, broke up after her death in 1819.

Though the founder of Mormonism was born in Vermont, he spent most of his youth in western New York, on a farm near Palmyra where his parents settled in 1815 or 1816. Here were found the famous golden tablets, and here was composed and printed the famous Book of Mormon. At Manchester, in 1830, the new sect was founded, and at Fayette was formally organized a few weeks later. Skeptical neighbors, however, saw nothing of the prophet in ne'er-do-well Joseph Smith. They were so lacking in faith that Smith, to escape their "persecutions," abandoned his home the next year and sought to promulgate his new gospel in Ohio. Western New York had

given birth to a new faith, but refused to acknowledge its offspring.

Close to Smith's old home in Wayne County, there arose, a score of years later, a new cult of spiritualists. The Fox family moved in from Canada in 1847. Shortly afterward, the mischievous daughters, Margaret and Kate, were mystifying their superstitious mother and neighbors with spiritualistic "knockings." In Rochester, at the home of an elder sister, the girls renewed their séances in 1849. Soon "Rochester rappings" became famous. New York City took them up the following year, paying well for the privilege. The Fox version of spiritualism was launched; a new, if short-lived, cult had come out of western New York.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

Political organization had kept pace in its changes with the spread and growth of population in the western districts. When patriotic fervor at the end of the Revolution changed the name of Tryon to Montgomery, the newly denominated county embraced the whole of central and western New York. By 1789 there was population sufficient to warrant the setting off of Ontario County. The new unit was vast. Within its limits, by 1854, there existed fourteen counties. By that time, the former Montgomery County had been broken into twenty-four various-sized parts. The tendency toward subdivision had been irresistible, for local pride, ambition and convenience demanded smaller units. It did not triumph without opposition, however. Politicians, established in control of the old counties, resented the curtailment of their influence. Large landholders feared the sharp increases in taxation consequent to the building of new court-houses and jails and the election of new corps of local officers. Influential as such opponents might be, they were largely out-

voted by their humbler neighbors, who in general favored the subdivisions. The location of the county seat was oftentimes a point of bitter controversy.

Political life in the region was active and vigorous. As in other communities of the state, party warfare was carried on with the acrimony which characterized the period. As the population grew and the political weight of the western districts increased, local leaders began to play a part on a larger stage. Peter B. Porter came out of the west during the first decade of the nineteenth century, to represent the frontier at Washington. As one of the most influential "war hawks," he took the lead in the policy of resistance to Great Britain which led to the War of 1812. Auburn supplied, in the person of Enos T. Throop, the first governor of the state from the western districts (1829). It gave a second, a decade later, in William H. Seward. Only once before had a New Yorker filled the president's chair, when, in 1850, Millard Fillmore of Buffalo became the chief executive of the nation. A lesser cause of pride to the residents of the western counties, but of great interest historically, is the origin of the Anti-Masonic party on the Holland Purchase in the later twenties. William Morgan, when he disappeared from Batavia in 1826, was the unwitting cause of a tremendous agitation. The Anti-Masonic political movement which resulted is evidence that there was no lack of adroit and able politicians in the western counties.

By mid-century, these regions, which at the close of the Revolution had been the home of the Six Nations, were playing their full part in the economic, the political, and the social life of the state. They had been settled with extraordinary rapidity. In the space of two generations they had been transformed from frontier communities into flourishing settled districts, big with that promise which has been so abundantly fulfilled in our own day.

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THE SETTLEMENT OF THE
NORTH COUNTRY

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THE SETTLEMENT OF THE NORTH COUNTRY

FRENCH MASTERS REPLACED BY ENGLISH

THE boundaries of northern New York are well defined by nature, and serve to set apart the region as a geographic unit. Northern New York includes the area lying between Lake Champlain on the east, Lake Ontario on the west, the Saint Lawrence River and Canada on the north, and the southern slopes of the Adirondack Mountains on the south. It is a distinctively American community, basically English, which has received slight infusion of immigration from the Old World and therefore retains the characteristics of its New England ancestry. It is an agricultural country; its thought was, and still is, of the soil. No great manufacturing cities have risen within its boundaries, though its water powers have furnished sites for local industries and for numerous paper mills. A singularly favored region, the Saint Lawrence River and the Adirondacks, with their lakes and streams, afford attractive landscapes, sport and recreation. Its climate is equable. Very few of its people are rich and few are really poor.

Comprised within this "north country" are the six counties of Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Jefferson, Lewis, and Saint Lawrence, and portions of four more to the south of them. Its combined area exceeds 10,000 square miles—greater than each of seven states of the Union; its population approximates 350,000—greater than that of each of three states—or 34.6 per square mile, while that of the state as a whole is 264.2. Three cities lie within its borders—Ogdensburg, Plattsburg, and Watertown—and several others are just beyond its southern edge.

Of northern New York prior to the Revolution and for sev-

eral years thereafter, little is known. Save for Father Picquet's settlement in 1749 at the Mission of La Présentation where Ogdensburg now is, and the French in the Champlain Valley on the east, there were no white men nearer than Oswego and Canada. Expeditions, it is true, had passed up and down the Saint Lawrence River, both before and during the Revolution, but no other settlement had been made on the soil of northern New York. The Indians, as the first possessors of the land, based their title on occupancy, and could be dispossessed only by purchase with their consent. On a map of New York made as late as 1771, the Oneida Indians are indicated as owning the western slope of the Adirondacks, and the Mohawks the eastern slope. On a map in Jefferys' *French Dominions in America*, the country bordering on the Saint Lawrence River is marked "deer hunting grounds of the Iroquois." And on an undated map, published in the *Documentary History of the State of New York*, IV, 330, it is called "the beaver hunting country of the Six Nations." Across the territory now comprised in Saint Lawrence and Franklin Counties is written:

Through this tract of land runs a chain of mountains, which from Lake Champlain on one side, and the River St. Lawrence on the other side, show their tops always white with snow, but although this one unfavorable circumstance has hitherto secured it from the claws of the harpy land-jobbers, yet no doubt it is as fertile as the land on the east side of the lake, and will in future furnish a comfortable retreat for many industrious families.

In the same year that Henry Hudson discovered the Hudson River, Samuel de Champlain, bearing the lilies of France, made his way up the Saint Lawrence from Quebec, passed through the Richelieu River, and on July 29, 1609, gazed upon the lake that now bears his name, the first white man to land upon the soil of northern New York. And in 1615 he first set foot upon

what is now Jefferson County, landing for an Indian council. Thus, both east and west, it was Champlain who was the discoverer of northern New York.

For over one hundred years after Champlain's discovery, neither France, nor Holland, nor England made any attempt at permanent settlement in this disputed region. France, indeed, could claim title only by right of discovery, while the claims of England were augmented by the cession of New Netherland, which conveyed the rights of Holland, and by treaties with the Iroquois. France, in support of her title, further alleged that Holland had never established rights superior to those of France and consequently could not convey such to England. As to any title acquired from the Indians, France asserted the validity of treaties between the French and Indians running back as far as 1665. Fort Saint Frédéric, built by France at Crown Point on Lake Champlain in 1731, became for nearly fifty years the sign and symbol of possession, now for France, now for England. In 1732, France had surveyed and mapped both shores of Lake Champlain. A number of seigneuries were granted, for example, that of Alainville (1758), around Ticonderoga; and, as shown in a report of Capt. Stoddert in 1750, fourteen farms were occupied by Frenchmen in the country surrounding Crown Point. It was not until 1755 that the British government demanded of France the demolition of Fort Saint Frédéric. But France not only held the fort; she also strengthened her position by the peaceful method of colonization.

The French and Indian War ended with the triumph of Great Britain, and the transfer of the colonial empire of France to the victor. On October 7, 1763, the king of Great Britain, by royal proclamation, authorized the governors of his colonies in North America to issue grants of land to be located in any colony, as the grantee might desire. Officers and men of the Canadian campaigns especially were to be considered in the

issuing of these grants. Naturally veterans of these campaigns sought land in that section with which they were familiar and over which they had fought. Then began conflicts with the grants already issued by France, and the adjustment of the rights of the respective parties was difficult. An amicable settlement was complicated by the controversy between the authorities of New York and of New Hampshire over the eastern boundary of New York.

Great Britain exhibited great liberality and consideration toward the holders of the French grants, going so far, in 1769, as to suspend temporarily the issuing of all grants to land north of Crown Point. In the five years preceding, however, so great had been the number issued, and so numerous the conflicts of title between French and English, that great confusion existed, and the land was accordingly depressed in value. Nevertheless, English settlement began along the shore of Lake Champlain. To the northern part of Essex County came William Gilliland, a New York City merchant, to settle Willsborough in 1765 with his tenants, and to name the new settlement near it Bessboro, later Elizabethtown, after his wife. Robert Harpur, in 1765, obtained 40,000 acres, at the southern end of Lake Champlain, for a settlement. Benjamin Porter built the first mill in Port Henry; William McAuley located at Essex, and Samuel Deal at Ticonderoga. In 1784, Judge Zephaniah Platt and thirty-two others purchased rights to a township, on which Charles de Fredenburgh had located before the Revolution, and on this territory laid out an extensive settlement to be known as Plattsburg.

Save for the Champlain Valley, northern New York, still a wilderness and unpeopled, saw but little of the Revolution. Lake Champlain and Lake George, however, forming a natural highway to and from Canada, inevitably became a theater of conflict. Shortly after the battle of Lexington, Crown Point

and Ticonderoga were captured by the Americans, and the cannon were used to drive the British out of Boston. The Champlain Valley saw in succession the armies of Carleton and of Burgoyne, marching south from Canada. Carleton, in 1776, reached Crown Point, which he recaptured from the Americans, and then advanced on Ticonderoga, but hearing nothing from Howe was obliged to retreat. One event of this futile campaign stands out, the naval battle on Lake Champlain, in which Benedict Arnold, though defeated, yet inflicted such damage upon his adversary that the victory was dearly bought and contributed to the latter's withdrawal to Canada.

The admirably-planned Burgoyne campaign again brought the reality of war to northern New York. Burgoyne, passing up the lake with his Indians and loyalists, and his German and British regulars, was forced to surrender at Saratoga, and northern New York saw little more fighting during the Revolution. This does not mean, however, that it saw no more of the British soldiers and loyalists, for garrisons were maintained at Oswego and at Fort Haldimand on Carleton Island off Cape Vincent—posts which were not surrendered till years after the peace.

At the close of the Revolution this part of the state was still in great part a wilderness, with land plentiful, but unwanted. Clinton and Warren Counties had no permanent settlers until 1763; Essex 1765, Saint Lawrence—after the French—none until 1792, Franklin 1796, Jefferson 1799, Oswego 1789, and Lewis 1794. In fact there was at this time no demand for land north of the Adirondacks.

Before the Revolution the English government had granted in 1773 a tract of 800,000 acres, since known as the Totten and Crossfield Purchase, the northernmost of the English grants, which Sir William Johnson persuaded the Indians to sell in 1772. Surveyors, in running the lines of this purchase, the northern

line of which forms the southern boundary of Saint Lawrence County, reported the territory lying along the Saint Lawrence River to be a ragged and inhospitable wilderness.

THE RED MAN'S CONTACTS

No Indians lived in Saint Lawrence or Franklin County before the colonies settled by French priests at Oswegatchie and Saint Regis about the middle of the eighteenth century. Long before, red men had lived in Jefferson County, and there are today many traces of their occupation. Near Rodman, at Adams, in the vicinity of Theresa, and along the river front between Clayton and Cape Vincent are unmistakable signs of Indian habitation. Indeed, some of the most interesting and informing displays in the State Museum in Albany are made up of items gathered in Jefferson County. The Indians used the Saint Lawrence River as one of their main highways of travel. From and to the central part of the state, they followed the natural waterways across the soil of what is now Jefferson County. This route developed into one of the great Indian trails of New York. On the east, Lake Champlain furnished another great highway from the Saint Lawrence to the Hudson and Mohawk Valleys. Thus the area of Saint Lawrence and Franklin Counties and the Adirondacks, between the great highways, was left a wilderness, unexplored and unoccupied, while Indians and white men, eager missionaries and hardy *coureurs de bois*, traders and explorers, passed up and down the Saint Lawrence and Lake Champlain, to and from Canada. In only one instance have we a record of the penetration of it prior to the close of the Revolutionary War—the flight of the stanch Tory, Sir John Johnson, in 1776, from the Mohawk Valley to Canada. To escape capture by the patriots, Sir John, with a motley band of some 300 white men, mostly Germans and Scotch, and the

same number of Indians, fled northward through the Adirondack wilderness to Canada. In nineteen days from the time he left Johnstown, he emerged on the bank of the Saint Lawrence River, about a mile above the mouth of the Racket River, having in the meantime crossed the Big Woods from south to north in the face of incredible hardships. For most of the way, however, he followed an old Indian trail, and opinions differ as to his exact route across Saint Lawrence County. The point here is that this is the first recorded expedition of white men through northern New York.

Long before the Dutch came to New Netherland, the Iroquois had abandoned the territory now forming Jefferson County, possibly because the Saint Lawrence frontier was too easily accessible to the hostile Hurons from Canada. Their fires here were abandoned, to be set up again in the central part of the state. Their war parties still came from the south to wage eternal conflict with their enemies from the north; their summer hunting parties followed the bear and the deer, and their fishing parties sought the waters of the Saint Lawrence, along the age-old trails through the present Jefferson and Saint Lawrence Counties.

As an Indian possession, northern New York was roughly divided into three grand divisions. Along the shore of Lake Ontario and the Saint Lawrence, from a point just east of Cape Vincent running southwesterly to Oneida Lake, was the territory of the Onondagas; east of this region, to a line running from the Saint Lawrence River almost due south to the Mohawk River, passing through present Canton, with Gouverneur and Lowville in the center of the strip, lay the territory of the Oneidas; while eastward again, to the shores of Lake Champlain, lay the territory claimed by the Mohawks. So well established was the claim of these respective tribes to this territory, that New York State, when it prepared to colonize, found it neces-

sary to deal with all three of these Indian groups in the purchase of title.

There were four main Indian trails leading from the lower part of the state to the Saint Lawrence, and some three or four minor avenues of approach. The four great trails were the Onondaga war trail, the Salmon River trail, the Oswegatchie trail from Oneida Lake to the Saint Lawrence, and the trail connecting the Mohawk country with Oswegatchie. Of these, the one best known and most used was the Onondaga war trail. This route followed the Oswego River down to Lake Ontario; thence along the lake shore to Stony Creek near Pulaski; up Stony Creek to a short carry across to Henderson Bay, thus avoiding the treacherous water off Stony Point; across Henderson Bay, past Sackett's Harbor, to the mouth of the Chaumont River; up the Chaumont River as far as possible; a six-mile carry to French Creek, and down it to the Saint Lawrence River, where Clayton, once known as French Creek, now stands. Along this trail passed hunting parties, fishing parties, war parties, and Indian women and children. It is probably the trail that Champlain followed when he made his first visit to central New York. Both the French and the English used it in the pursuit of war and trade, as well as for exploration. The first white men to settle in Jefferson County followed it to their new homes.

The Salmon River trail was short, starting from the eastern end of Oneida Lake, and following the Salmon River through Oneida County to Lake Ontario, where it merged into the Onondaga trail. From the Mohawk Valley, another route led up the West Canada Creek to the headwaters of the Black River, and down it to Great Bend, thence to Indian River somewhere between Philadelphia and Theresa and down it to Black Lake, thence down the Oswegatchie to the Saint Lawrence River. Still a fourth route started from the head of Oneida Lake, like the Salmon River trail, crossed overland through

Oneida and Jefferson Counties to a junction with the Indian River, and thence through Black Lake and the Oswegatchie, as before. This Black River trail was much used, despite its difficulties, as were also two other lesser and shorter trails from the Mohawk country through the woods, one toward Black Lake, the other eastward to the Oswegatchie. It is along these trails that the great finds of Indian relics have been made. The Indian trail on land was a well-worn path, a foot or more in width, sometimes a foot in depth, and accommodating itself to the terrain; but wherever possible the waterways were used.

In 1782 and in 1788, the state purchased from the Oneidas, the Cayugas and the Onondagas the whole of their lands running up to the Saint Lawrence River, reserving to the Indians certain tracts for their own use. Again in 1795, the state purchased from the Mohawks title to other lands in the northern part of the state.

LAND GRANTS, COUNTIES, AND ROADS

In 1786, with a desire to promote settlement, the legislature took action to bring into the market these unpatented lands. An act was passed creating land commissioners and empowering them to lay out townships and to dispose of unsold lands. Accordingly, in pursuance of the powers vested in them, the board, on May 25, 1787:

Resolved: That the surveyor-general be . . . directed, to lay down, on a map, two ranges of townships for sale, each township to contain as nearly as may be 64,000 acres, and as nearly square as local circumstances will permit, and to subdivide each township into lots . . . to contain 640 acres. That each range contain five townships adjoining each other, and one of said ranges to be bounded on the St. Lawrence River.

Thus were created the Saint Lawrence Ten Towns: Louisville, Stockholm, Potsdam, Madrid, Lisbon, Canton, De Kalb, Oswegatchie, Hague and Cambray. Save for one old Indian name, those of our late ally, the King of France, and a hero of the Revolution, the state officials had copied the names of European capitals and the Asiatic port just penetrated by American commerce. Cambray and Hague, however, were soon to yield their European glitter, replaced by Gouverneur and Morristown respectively in honor of their principal proprietor, Gouverneur Morris.

Hough, in his *History of St. Lawrence County*, says that the value of the tract was entirely unknown, that there was no knowledge of its formation, of its rivers, lakes or streams, save that it stretched back from the shore of the boundary river. It was easy so to draw ten towns square on the map. The Saint Lawrence Ten Towns were sold by auction in New York City on July 10, 1787. It was the intention of the board, in offering the lands in small parcels, to induce those of limited means to purchase, but a combination of powerful individuals emerged as holders when the sale was concluded. The principal purchaser was Alexander Macomb, always an adventurer, in early life a fur trader in Detroit, and it is probable that it was during his trips up and down the Saint Lawrence River that his mind turned toward land speculation in northern New York.

In 1786, too, the legislature set apart the Military Tract, later known as the Old Military Tract to distinguish it from a similar reservation in another part of the state. This tract comprised in general the eastern half of Franklin County and five towns in Essex and Clinton Counties. These lands were to be granted to satisfy the claims of persons entitled to bounty lands for service in the Revolutionary army. It is significant evidence of the value of the land in the public mind that not a single acre in this tract was ever preempted by a single soldier.

Other tracts, later offered in the central part of the state, were deemed more desirable. All of the tract was subsequently sold by the state at a price averaging ninepence an acre. East of the Old Military Tract, 130,000 acres were set aside for Canadian and Nova Scotian refugees, but it reverted to the state by reason of nonoccupation. In 1783 Major Benjamin Mooers and seven associates located on the Beekman patent near it.

In 1791 occurred the greatest sale ever made by the state, the Macomb Purchase, comprising nearly 4,000,000 acres at eightpence an acre, including all the portions of Franklin, Saint Lawrence, Jefferson, Lewis and Oswego Counties not theretofore disposed of, together with the adjoining islands in the Saint Lawrence River. Macomb became financially involved before completing this transaction, as has been set forth above, and, by a series of transfers, various sections of the lands for which he had bargained became vested in a number of people, some of whom had undoubtedly been silent partners in his purchase in 1787 and 1791. This development brought to the front the men who caused the lands to be surveyed, subdivided, and settled—the men who were the real developers of northern New York—Daniel McCormick, William Constable, John McVickar, Hezekiah B. Pierrepoint and Richard Harison. Others, at a later day, were Le Ray de Chaumont, Michael Hogan, Henry Van Rensselaer, the Clarksons, the Ellises, and Gen. Lewis Morris.

In 1791, John and Nicholas J. Roosevelt, New York merchants, purchased 500,000 acres south and west of the Macomb Purchase. Three years later, George Scriba obtained a large tract between Oneida Lake and Lake Ontario, and sold a portion of it to Alexander Hamilton. John Jay also owned land in Oswego County. Other names associated with land speculations were Col. John Lamb, Gouverneur Morris, William Cooper, Robert Morris, Jacob Brown, Nicholas Low, Walter Martin and Hopper Brantingham.

By 1800, the tide of settlement had begun. James Constable, representing his brother William, in 1804 made a tour on horseback through northern New York, going as far east as Malone. Of his visit to Oswegatchie he says: "The soil of this town is very indifferent, and the settlers few, there being but fifty families in the whole, ten of which in the village or near it [Ogdensburg], tho Judge Ford began the settlement by building his mills in 1796 on the side opposite to or west of the village." An earlier visitor had been Washington Irving, who in 1803 spent a part of the summer at Oswegatchie.

Tryon and Charlotte Counties were set off from Albany in 1772. Tryon, later renamed Montgomery County, included the western part of northern New York, and Charlotte County the eastern part. Clinton County was the first to organize in 1788, and it then comprised substantially all of Essex, all of Franklin and a part of Saint Lawrence County, there being in 1790 in that area 1,614 inhabitants. Essex County was set off from Clinton in 1799. Warren County was not formed from Washington till 1813. So great was the distance of the western part of Clinton County from Plattsburg, and so difficult was travel, that in 1801 the citizens of the town of Lisbon petitioned for county government, and in 1802 the county of Saint Lawrence, much as it is today, with its western part subtracted from Montgomery, Herkimer (1791) and Oneida (1798) Counties, was set off. The county seat was Ogdensburg until 1828, when Canton was chosen. The Black River Valley was likewise a long way from Utica, the county seat of Oneida, so in 1805 citizens of the northern part of that county met to discuss their civic needs. It had been the purpose of the meeting, says Hough, to ask for the setting apart of one county, but other counsels prevailed and it was finally decided to ask for the formation of two counties, one to be known as Jefferson and the other as Lewis, the names chosen from the chief executives of the nation

and of the state. There was some remonstrance from Oneida County, but the committee to which the matter was referred reported that the division was necessary, and accordingly a bill was prepared and passed, in 1805, setting up the counties as requested. Martinsburgh was the first county seat of Lewis County, and remained so until the railroad came to Lowville, in 1876. Watertown, chosen over Brownville, was made the county seat for Jefferson County. Oswego County was not formed from Oneida and Onondaga until 1816, the same year Hamilton split off from Montgomery.

Immigration into the new country rapidly increased, though access to it was still difficult. From Plattsburg a road was opened to the present site of Malone, through the "Chatagua Wood," as the old maps put it. West of Malone, the country was still a wilderness. The Ogdensburg road, from the Long Falls on the Black River (now Carthage) to the Old Oswegatchie Fort (now Ogdensburg), built by Judge Ford, was opened in 1801. These roads alone, at the beginning of the century, gave access to the western area of northern New York. Here are the specifications of the Ogdensburg road:

At sixteen dollars per mile; the road to be cut and cleared one rod, cradle knolls and sides or ridges to be levelled; small crossings and bridges over small streams to be made. Trees eighteen inches and under to be cut out. Stumps to be cut so low as not to obstruct a wheel and large trees to be girdled.

As large trees were allowed to stand until they had died before their removal was attempted, the traveler had to go around them.

Coming almost exclusively from New England, by way of the Black River Valley or across Lake Champlain, plunging into the wilderness or following the north bank of the Saint Lawrence to a crossing point, the settlers brought with them the

New England habits of industry, perseverance and frugality. This last quality, indeed, was born of necessity as much as of disposition. There was no money in the country, and there are authentic cases on record of whole families arriving with less than five dollars in their possession. Evidences of New England ancestry, in northern New York, are everywhere visible today, in the appearance of the villages, in the family names and in the independence, industry and economy exhibited by the populace. Indeed, probably in few other portions of the United States has there been less infusion of foreign blood. The great immigrant invasion after the Civil War passed northern New York by, and sought the manufacturing regions of the Middle West and the agricultural states of the Mississippi Valley. Only two strains have modified the original blood. In 1849 following the great famine Irish settlers in numbers sought farms in northern New York principally in Saint Lawrence and Franklin Counties. Later French-Canadians settled largely in Clinton and Essex Counties, and in portions of Saint Lawrence and Jefferson Counties. Absorbed into the life of northern New York, these newcomers, possessing many similar characteristics, have now been for so long an integral part of its citizenship that their foreign origin is forgotten. One exception to the general statement should be noted. In Jefferson and Lewis Counties there was an immigration of the French, among whom James Le Ray de Chaumont was the most notable permanent figure, though Joseph Bonaparte, ex-king of Spain, living in temporary residence, was the most illustrious. While not numerically large, it affected the life of the section and left names that persist to the present time.

Settlement along the Saint Lawrence was rapid. Back from the river, however, the country was still a wilderness, and the account of its development requires mention of one of the historic roads of the north country, a road that played a promi-

ment part both in peace and in war—the Saint Lawrence Turnpike. Built in 1810 by a private corporation, it ran from Carthage to Malone through the southern portion of Saint Lawrence County, and was cut through the primeval forest. Born of political and economic need, its history epitomizes that of its period and of the country whose soil it traversed. Murmurs of the War of 1812 were in the air. It was felt that the roads lying along the border were so located as to be subject to enemy occupation, and that a connecting highway back from the border was a military necessity. Moreover, the large landowners who had come into possession of the great tracts to the southward were interested, because they realized that until access could be had to their lands few settlers could be induced to locate. Hence such a road was necessary for the economic development of northern New York, and long after the War of 1812 it played a large part in the development of the section. It was an ambitious undertaking, and the specifications show that progress had been made in the art of road-making. Along its way passed many a settler, and during the War of 1812 troops marched over it time after time, to and from Sackett's Harbor, French Mills (now Fort Covington) and Malone. Over it rode Col. Zebulon M. Pike, the discoverer of Pike's Peak. On one day three hundred wagons, bearing supplies for the army, traversed it north-bound. Under the private corporation it was a toll road, but its life as such was short. Today the old road remains, parts of it incorporated into the town highway systems, parts of it as its builders left it. It was on this road, at Russell, that New York State located an arsenal, which served its purpose during the War of 1812, but was soon abandoned, sold to the town, and was used for many years as a school building.

Two other historic roads of the north country were built, the Hopkinton and Port Kent turnpike, and the Northwest

Bay road. Both took their origin at Hopkinton on the Saint Lawrence turnpike, and ran through the Adirondack wilderness, the one to Port Kent, and the other to the Northwest Bay (now Westport) on Lake Champlain. Both were in later days stagecoach routes, and the Northwest Bay road was the first to cross Franklin County. Neither of them was in military use during the War of 1812.

Reference may be made to an early vision of a transportation system which never materialized. The great commercial success of the Erie Canal, and of canals in other states, led in 1825 to plans for canals in northern New York—one of the dreams of the elderly Elkanah Watson, of Port Kent. A survey was made for a canal to connect the Saint Lawrence River at Ogdensburg with Lake Champlain at Plattsburg. At the same time, a canal was proposed from Westport on Lake Champlain, through the Adirondacks, to Boonville on the Black River Canal. No survey of the latter route was ever made, and both plans were abandoned. Later, in 1840, a more ambitious plan was conceived and surveys were made to extend the Black River Canal from Carthage to Ogdensburg, with one branch to Clayton, and another to Watertown. This plan likewise came to naught, principally, if not wholly, because of the expense involved and the probability of inadequate returns.

In 1804, Daniel Gould, the first mail carrier to penetrate northern New York, began his weekly journey from Utica to Brownville, in Jefferson County, the residence of Gen. Jacob Brown and apparently the destined business center. In 1812, stagecoaches were operating into northern New York from Utica and Rome, with terminals at Watertown, Sackett's Harbor and Cape Vincent. One line followed the Black River Valley, and another passed from Rome through Camden, Lorraine and Adams. Still another line ran from Rome through Turin to Denmark, where it connected with a line to Ogdensburg.

Similarly, access to northern New York from the east began with Jonathan Thompson of Malone, who had come into northern New York as a soldier of the War of 1812, and began to carry the mail, first on horseback and then with a horse and wagon. In 1836, he had some three hundred horses in use and in reserve, from fifteen to twenty professional drivers, and many coaches and wagons. His coaches plied regularly between Ogdensburg and Plattsburg, and continued to do so until the building of the Northern Railroad in 1850. Contemporaneous with the last days of the stagecoach was the almost forgotten plank-road era, to be described in another chapter.

MARKETS, TRANSPORTATION, AND EMBARGO

It is not generally realized that the first business contacts of the western area with the outside world were to the north and the east. With the development of its transportation system, the arrow has turned half way round and now points to the south and the west. The first markets were at Montreal. Eyes then turned toward Boston, and Boston business men turned again to Ogdensburg, with its possibilities as an inland port for New England. A railroad was planned to run from Rouse's Point, on Lake Champlain, to Ogdensburg, thus forming, with the New England railroads and the lake boats, a through line to the West. This railroad was opened in 1850 and is therefore one of the older roads of the state. When planned, it was to run from Ogdensburg through Canton and Potsdam to Malone, and these two places subscribed to its bonds. Construction costs were heavy, however, and it was finally built in a straight line from Malone to Ogdensburg, and the subscriptions in Canton and Potsdam were returned. What these places desired, however, was a railroad. The Watertown and Rome Railroad had just been completed, and the Potsdam and Watertown Rail-

road was soon incorporated to build a line from some point on the Northern Railroad, through Potsdam and Canton, to Watertown. Trains were running from Potsdam Junction (now Norwood) to Watertown in 1857.

During the years preceding the building of the railroad, there were many steamboat lines plying the Saint Lawrence River and Lake Ontario. The first steamboat to sail the Great Lakes was built in 1816 at Sackett's Harbor—the "Ontario," of 400 tons. Within the next eighteen years twenty steamboats were built at various ports of northwestern New York, and the "Vandalia" in 1841 was run by a propeller. In 1840, there were some twelve sailings a week from Oswego for lake and river ports, and Hough lists some twenty steamboats in regular passenger and freight service. Indeed a favorite means of reaching Buffalo from Albany and New York was to go from Utica to Cape Vincent by stage, and the rest of the way on the lake, thus substituting one day by stage and several days by water for a hot and dusty stage ride all the way. In 1817, when President Monroe made his celebrated tour through the northern states, organized transportation had not begun. Monroe entered northern New York at Plattsburg and thence passed overland to Malone, Hamilton (now Waddington), Ogdensburg, Antwerp, Watertown and Sackett's Harbor. In other ways, this first presidential journey was quite unlike those of a later date. Monroe, traveling on horseback, had with him a single secretary, though army officers accompanied him a part of the time. He was entertained at private houses and saw neither a secret service man nor a newspaper reporter during the whole trip. The tour was described in the press of the time, however, either approvingly or otherwise, as the politics of the editor suggested. An Albany paper dismissed it in two words, "Such bombast!" A later presidential visitor was Martin Van Buren, who once during his term of office stayed from Saturday to Mon-

day in Canton with his friend, Silas Wright. President Van Buren's *entourage* was plain and unostentatious. Joshua Risdon of Hopkinton, who kept a diary, referred to his visit in this wise: "The President of the United States passed here to-day." Van Buren was accompanied by the Hon. Joel Poinsett, Secretary of War, but otherwise was without attendants.

The embargo of 1807, disastrous as it was to northern New York, is a chapter almost forgotten in the history of that area. No sooner had the embargo been passed than it became a matter of life and death with the settlers. Poor as the new country was, the stoppage of all trade with Canada cut off the section's only market. The first settlement in northern New York, save for Father Picquet's mission at Oswegatchie and the settlements along Lake Champlain, was less than ten years old. Most of the country was a wilderness, resounding to the axe of the hardy settler. There were no roads to the Mohawk country save Judge Ford's Ogdensburg road just opening, and only the Chateaugay road, hardly more than a trail, from the east. The Saint Lawrence River furnished the easiest and cheapest means of approach or departure. There was no manufacture and no agriculture in the larger sense of the terms. Ready money was scarce. But these men had to have some money, and it had to be earned from the soil. Fortunately, nature indicated the way. The first task of any settler was to clear the land. This meant cutting down the forest and grubbing out the stumps. There were no sawmills. After laboriously hewing out foundation and wall timbers for his humble habitation, there were countless trunks lying on the ground. These must be removed before tilling of the soil could begin in earnest. Many a corn and wheat crop in the early days was harvested from a field largely filled with stumps. The easiest way in which to get rid of these stumps and logs was to burn them, but not to burn them wastefully. And here was born northern New York's first industry—the

making of potash, then the only industry that brought "cash money" in the Montreal market. Thus the embargo struck a deathblow to northern New York; by its enforcement the settlers lost their only means of getting the wherewithal to pay their taxes and the few other bills that had to be paid in actual money.

The name potash is derived from ashes, from which it was produced, and from the pot, in which the lye was boiled to dryness. "Black salts" is a synonym. In his *Historical Sketches of Franklin County*, Frederick J. Seaver says that in the earliest operations each settler was himself the manufacturer through all the stages—felling the timber, burning it, gathering the ashes and leaching them, boiling down the lye and hauling the product to market. The labor must have been prodigious, as thirty cords of wood were required for the making of a ton of ashes, which in turn yielded only about a sixth of a ton of potash. Elm and ash were considered to give the largest yield of ashes. The business of producing vegetable potash disappeared long ago, owing to the exhaustion of the native wood supply and the discovery in Germany, in 1807, of a process of separating mineral potash from salt deposits. At the time under discussion, vegetable potash produced in northern New York sold as high as \$100 a ton, and during the embargo the price rose in the Montreal market to \$300 a ton. There were no Canadian restrictions on its import, and once in Montreal water transportation to British ports was available. It will thus be seen that two forces worked to defeat the embargo—necessity and cupidity.

No sooner, then, had the embargo been laid than efforts were made to break it. This applied to the inland lakes, equally with the seaboard, and of course called for measures to enforce an observance of nonintercourse. The collector of internal revenue at Sackett's Harbor, Hart Massey, of Watertown, in a report to Washington dated March 14, 1809, says:

Nature has furnished the smugglers with the firmest ice that was ever known on this frontier. There is scarcely a place from Oswegatchie to Sandy Creek a distance of 110 miles, but that the ice is good. Sleighs pass at Sackets Harbor ten miles from shore and all the force I can raise is not sufficient to stop them. They appear determined to evade the laws at the risk of their lives. More particularly at Oswegatchie, I am informed, they have entered into a combination not to entertain, nor even suffer any other force to be stationed in that vicinity, and their threats are handed out that if I, or any other officer should come there again, they will take a raw-hide to them. . . . The regular troops, and the inhabitants at that station, have a mutual understanding. If the troops that are there are not called away it will be in vain to send any more without sending enough to overpower them and the inhabitants. . . . There are some who wish to support the laws, but they are so unpopular that they shrink from their duty. My life and the lives of my deputies are threatened daily; what will be the fate of us, God only knows.

The language of Massey's report, though it sounds exaggerated today, did not at the time seem extreme. The opposition to the law was not entirely economic, though the hard times caused by the embargo provided the most important reason for combating it. But opposition to the Jefferson party, political rancor, and in some cases a genuine belief that an embargo was unconstitutional, also added to the feeling of the time. Whatever the reasons, however, the extent and the boldness of the opposition made a thrilling story of life on the Canadian frontier. As Collector Massey says, there was no place along the whole Saint Lawrence front, from Saint Regis to the lake, where smugglers might not be found. A traveler from Montreal, John Henry, also tells a significant story. From Montreal, he took the road usually traveled in those days, via Saint John and the valley of the Sorel River to Vermont. Reaching Swanton, he found the roads blocked with sleighs and the whole community busy hurrying lumber and produce across the line.

By 1808, the effects of the embargo had spread from the Canadian border to the farmers of the inland regions. In some places they had been holding back their flour for the increased prices of winter. But before these high prices could be secured, the ports were closed, the demand for flour stopped, and the farmers found themselves in possession of a commodity that they could not sell. If they obeyed the embargo, they would see their flour spoil on their hands. If they chose the dishonest way, two courses lay before them. They might turn smugglers themselves and hurry it over the line to Canada; or they might sell it to someone else to smuggle out of the country. Both methods were used, and there was a continuous procession of smugglers back and forth across the Canadian frontier. Because the inhabitants there were between the devil and the deep sea, smuggling was more open and bolder than elsewhere. From Saint Regis to Vermont, a favorite way was to load a dozen sleighs and drive toward Canada. A hill with steep slopes and close to the boundary would be selected and a rude hut put up. The hut was so built that when a stone was pulled from the foundation the whole structure would topple over into Canada. When thus built, the sleighs would be unloaded, the potash, flour and lumber placed in the house, the stone removed and the barrels sent rolling into Canada.

The ease with which the law could be avoided along the Canadian border turned whole families into smugglers and embargo breakers. Especially was this true at such convenient spots as Buffalo, Lewiston, Sackett's Harbor and, above all, Lake Champlain. Here open and elaborate plans were made for violation of the laws, produce was gathered on the lake shore, rafts were under construction, and everything was made ready for the coming of spring and the opening of the lakes and streams. Jefferson decided that this lawless section must be brought into subjection. He issued a proclamation declaring

the country round about Lake Champlain to be the seat of a conspiracy to defeat the execution of the law, describing the people as insurgents and calling on them to desist. Saint Albans, Vermont, was the chief town in the district thus placed under arrest, and the citizens of the village were so greatly offended by the President's action that they called a town meeting, and told him that the embargo had ended the sale of potash and lumber in exchange for the necessities of life, and that they did not require an embargo on the Canadian border. They asked that the act be suspended.

Jefferson's answer was a third supplementary embargo bill more drastic than its predecessors, commanding collectors of customs to seize all unusual deposits of foodstuffs or exportable articles, in ports adjacent to foreign soil; any American vessel could be searched by officers on suspicion; no boat could navigate interior waters until a manifest of the cargo had been filed with a collector and a clearance obtained. The President followed up this act with a circular to all collectors of customs: no more shipments of flaxseed, potash and pearlsh, lumber, flour, or food of any kind, were to be allowed unless indubitably needed for consumption at the place they were shipped to—this within the borders of the United States. The embargo took care of the rest.

These products of northern New York had always had a ready market, either at Montreal or at Albany. Now both markets were cut off. The people turned toward Canada as the easier solution of the two. On rafts they placed their potash and their pork, and with the help of the wind floated over the line into Canada. Windmill Bay was a favorite place of embarkation. It is reported that as many as twenty-five rafts went out in a night. Here, too, were to be found soldiers, with orders to stop all traveling along the roads to Canada and to cut off rafts near the line, but they did little. Shooting was a regular

part of the daily procedure. At Alburg, Vermont, a garrison of soldiers was deliberately attacked, captured and a dozen barrels of potash carried off. At another time a body of men, numbering some forty or more, armed and painted as Indians, surrounded a detachment of troops near the boundary and, as McMaster says, "frightened them into a profound sleep, while a raft with 30 sails and measuring ten acres in surface floated slowly by into Canadian waters." At Oswego, two lake craft having been refused clearance for Sackett's Harbor, the captain went off without clearing. The collector gave chase in a revenue cutter, but finding the crews armed and ready to fight he permitted them to proceed. This so enraged the Republicans that a part of them from surrounding territory volunteered to march to Oswego and enforce the embargo, while Governor Tompkins, taking a cue from the Champlain incident, asked the President to declare Oswego likewise in a state of insurrection. A somewhat similar incident occurred in Big Sandy Creek, with the result that the men of Ellisburg sent out a call to the people of Jefferson County to meet and take into consideration the legal way of seizing violators of the law.

In Jefferson County, where Collector Massey was still struggling with lawbreakers, there was so much illicit traffic with Canada that a road from Brownville to Fisher's Landing came to be known as the "Embargo Road," because of the frequent and regular traffic over it by embargo breakers.

At last, owing to the influence of northern New York and New England, and to the continued opposition of the commercial element everywhere, the embargo was repealed. It was merely one link in the chain of events that led to the War of 1812, in which, for two years, northern New York was the scene of military activities by land and water. But the effects of this conflict on New York State are explained in another chapter and hence may be omitted here.

THE PATRIOTS' WAR

Twenty-five years after the War of 1812, northern New York was again stirred by preparations for war. This was the Patriots' War, so called, an ill-starred attempt on the part of a few hundred enthusiasts on both sides of the border to free Canada from what they chose to designate as the yoke of England. The movement began in both Upper and Lower Canada, then political divisions of the dominion roughly corresponding to the Ontario and Quebec of today. There was rivalry between the assembly and the executive council, and in 1836 the assembly of Lower Canada asserted its right to set aside the constitution of 1791. William Lyon Mackenzie, in Upper Canada, set up a revolutionary government by the Patriots, with headquarters near Toronto. The movement received great and somewhat unexpected support along the border, where passions aroused by the War of 1812 even yet had hardly cooled. Throughout northern New York and in Vermont, a secret order sprang into existence, with lodges, secrets, passwords, and all of the accepted necessities of such an organization. These lodges, called "Hunter" lodges (named, it is understood, from their originator), numbered at one time over 200,000 members. Mackenzie, in the meantime, had fled to the United States, where he and his followers seized the steamer "Caroline," as well as Navy Island in the Niagara River. British troops crossed to the American side, cut the "Caroline" loose, and set her on fire. In the United States feeling ran high; Governor Marcy sent a special message to the legislature, and President Van Buren one to Congress. Mackenzie visited Watertown and men, with and without arms, began gathering at Clayton. A military movement with Clayton as a base failed. Then came the capture and destruction by Patriots of the "Sir Robert Peel," an event which aroused bitter feeling on both sides of

the border. In November, 1838, a determined effort at the invasion of Canada was undertaken. A band of Patriots, under command of Col. N. G. S. von Shoultz, boarded the steamer "United States" at Oswego, on one of her regular trips to Ogdensburg. Entering the Saint Lawrence River, the Patriots seized the vessel and took in tow two schooners, both loaded with arms and ammunition. It was the plan of the expedition to capture Prescott. Gen. William Birge was in command, but he became ill at Ogdensburg, and the command devolved upon Colonel von Shoultz.

It had been Von Shoultz's intention to capture Fort Wellington, a fortress which still stands on the outskirts of Prescott. His approach, however, was discovered, and the alarm given. It became necessary to make a change in the plan. Below the village there still stands an old stone windmill, which the practiced eye of Von Shoultz saw would make an admirable fortress. He and his men took possession of this windmill, and there mounted their artillery. The British started the attack on the windmill by a bombardment from two steamers, with little effect, followed by an assault by British regulars and Canadian militia. The Patriot cause was, from the first, of course, hopeless. The revolutionists held out in the windmill from Tuesday to Friday, expecting at first that the Canadian militia would come to their support. Instead, the Canadians outdid the soldiers of the regular army in the intensity of their opposition and when the defenders of the windmill at last surrendered they were marched out between files of the Eighty-third Regiment, as a protection from the Canadian militia. Von Shoultz attempted to escape, but was captured and, with the other captives, taken to Kingston. Eleven of the prisoners were there hanged. Some of the younger men were pardoned. One hundred and forty-one were transported to Van Diemen's Land, and it was several years before these prisoners, a few at a time, were pardoned and

allowed to return to their homes. A number of them died in captivity. The Patriots' War failed because there was no general desire on the part of the Canadian people for independence from Great Britain. Hard feeling existed for several years thereafter along the border, but this gradually subsided, following both the lapse of time and the efforts of public officials to create a better feeling between the two nations. The misguided Patriots thought that they were called upon to liberate a people from tyranny. They were mistaken.

PIONEER LIFE

Living conditions of the early settlers, as compared with those today in northern New York, were so primitive that the present generation finds it well-nigh impossible to comprehend them. Prior to the War of 1812 little of consequence occurred save the prompt establishment of schools and churches, which might be expected, considering the New England origin of these first settlers. Of money there was little, and most dwellings had to be of logs. There were no stoves; the fireplace furnished both heat and light, save for the feeble flame of the tallow dip. Matches were unknown until the thirties, and the flint and tinder were used when the carefully covered fire had gone out. On occasion, even the flint and tinder were not at hand, and fire was brought from the nearest neighbor. Flour was made from rye instead of from wheat, and mills were few and far between. Settlers in Franklin County had to go as far as Plattsburg, or to Canton in Saint Lawrence County, where mills with "two runs of stone" had been erected. Cloth was of home production, the wool or the flax being spun and made into clothing by the women of the family. Of medicine there was none, except home-processed herbs, and it is on record that one of the early settlers of Canton journeyed through the woods to the

Saint Lawrence River and then crossed to Canada in search of a physician. Surgery as we know it today did not exist. Building was done by "bees," and it was a point of honor for all the men to turn out to help a neighbor erect a dwelling. Nor should mention be omitted that it was as insistent a responsibility upon the part of the owner of the building to furnish an ample supply of liquor for the workers.

How did one of these pioneer homes look? A pamphlet written in 1882, entitled *Life on the Border Sixty Years Ago*, says:

The cabin was built of medium-sized logs, some twenty-four feet long and eighteen feet in width. There was only one room. The floor consisted of loose puncheons. There was no hearth or fire-place, only a place for each, and a backing of rude stonework against the logs at one end. At the foot of this, on the ground, the fire was built, and the smoke gradually found its way . . . out of a hole in the ridge of the roof. There was no window, only a place cut through the log wall on the side opposite the door. The roof was covered with rough boards. . . . There was no piazza . . . no well, no cistern, no cellar nor out-buildings of any kind. . . . We had no oven until one was built the second year out-of-doors, all the baking was done in the baker, or on flat tin surfaces placed at an angle to the fire. A door was constructed and hung upon wooden hinges, with a wooden latch opened from without by a leather string. Then three window sash were bought and glass was set. . . . Next a common table with crossed legs was constructed for every-day use, and it was used for that purpose for ten or more years. Then a fire-place was built by laying down a good solid hearth of flat stones, and on this a chimney was constructed . . . and the stone work carried up to the attic floor. From there the chimney was constructed to the ridge, and a couple of feet above, out of straight cedar sticks, some two or three inches square, laid up in a square form and plastered within and without with clay, to render it fire-proof. Then a floor was laid of white ash planks, sawed in a mill, but unplanned. The cabin itself was built of rough logs, hewn only on the inside, but between the numerous cracks straight cedar plugs or

wedges . . . were driven in between the logs on the inside of the house. This kept out part of the wind and the cold, but to make the job complete moss was gathered in the forest and driven into the cracks on the outside until they were completely filled. Then clay mortar was plastered over that rendering the walls of the cabin impervious to the cold. The fire-place would hold an eighth of a cord of wood. The blazing fire so illuminated the interior that no other light was needed. Reading, sewing, spinning, knitting, or conversation could all go on around such a blaze, and the occupants of the cabin cared not whether or not it was cold outside. The fire-place took more than fifty cords of wood to feed it.

Individually, material conditions in those early days were much more nearly equal than they have since grown to be. Virtually all these pioneers were poor, but all were thrifty, progressive and content to live economically and frugally. Of actual paupers there were, as late as 1825, only about one in every thousand people. Until 1825, each town cared for its own poor, but in that year the county system was inaugurated and each of the counties in northern New York purchased property for a poor farm.

With an insufficiency of capital, there was no large development of business or manufacturing. Banks, as reservoirs of cash or credit, did not come into being until about 1820, though there was a movement for a bank in Jefferson County as early as 1807. The chief industries of the first half century were lumbering, tanneries, distilleries (which began to disappear in the forties), a few ironworks—most of them, Seaver says, “only blacksmith shops”—and local gristmills. Mining in Essex, Jefferson and Saint Lawrence Counties was early a profitable occupation, though iron was the only metal sought prior to 1850. The iron mines of the Parish family at Rossie, in St. Lawrence County were, in 1817, of such promise that President Monroe, on his tour through northern New York, turned aside to visit

them. Kettles, stoves and nails were among the iron products. The farm staples were rye, wheat, corn, oats, potatoes, cheese and flax. The first county fair in this region was held at Watertown, in 1818. The domestic manufactures, apart from potash, were principally cloth, all of the work, save some of the carding, being done in the home. A woolen factory was established at Rutland, in Jefferson County, in 1812, one in Watertown the next year, and another in Franklin County in 1832; a cotton factory was established in Malone in 1829 and operated until 1849, contemporaneously with similar establishments in Jefferson County. A little paper mill was set up in Watertown as early as 1807. An early industry in Franklin County was the making of starch from potatoes, but the introduction of cornstarch drove the potato mill from business.

“THE UNION,” CULTURE, AND POLITICS

It is not generally known, even in northern New York, that here took place one of the earliest attempts at community life in the United States. Between Potsdam and Norwood, in Saint Lawrence County, remain a succession of houses and barns, obviously of venerable age, and of the same period, and all bearing a general resemblance to one another. Years before the transcendentalists met at Brook Farm, and Robert Owen had worked out his plan at New Harmony, Indiana, some twenty families from Vermont here organized “The Union,” and for six years sought to prove the possibilities of the social ideal of one for all and all for one. Probably the Brook Farm colonists had never heard of the colony in northern New York, although it is likely that William Bullard, the leader of “The Union,” knew of Robert Owen’s work in Scotland.

In the tide of settlers from New England, in the years following the opening of northern New York, came William

Bullard to spy out the land. Not much is known about him, save that he represented a company of men in Vermont who were looking for new homes in what the people of Plattsburg then termed the West. He was a student of the community theory, had written a pamphlet in support of his idea, and had brought a dozen or more families to his way of thinking. He came into northern New York in search of a suitable location for such a colony as he had planned. All property was to be held in trust by Bullard for the common good and each man or woman was to share equally in the proceeds, according to the amount of labor performed. There was to be an annual meeting at which time a settlement was to be made with each member.

Bullard, in 1803, selected lands in Potsdam and went back to New England to form his group. It took all of the summer of 1804 for the men with their equipment to get to their destination. The way led across Lake Champlain and through the wild Chateaugay Wood. On November 28, 1804, Bullard and his associates took up a tract of 2,427 acres about two miles north of Potsdam, at a total cost of \$8,656.04. The associates came principally from South Royalton, Vermont, and a history of that town speaks of the "exodus to Potsdam" in 1804. The associates at first did not formally organize. The land was contracted to Bullard, but farms were taken up individually. After three years of experience, the hard years of a new country, it was decided to complete the organization. In May, 1807, therefore, some of the original members having withdrawn and others having taken their places, "The Union" was organized. A constitution was adopted, and William Bullard was chosen president and school teacher. For three years his rule was successful. Then the heresy of self-interest began to creep in. The more industrious found that the less industrious were getting more than their share, despite the plan and the careful-

ness with which the books were kept. There were changes in membership and lessening of attachment. In 1810 "The Union" agreed to dissolve. All the property was divided, the land was apportioned, and the Unionists, now individualists, went on living side by side under the changed conditions. The final transfers were from the land office, which would indicate that Bullard himself never took legal title.

Missionaries appeared shortly after 1800, and a church organization was effected in Franklin County in 1807. A missionary in Jefferson County, in 1802, reported that he had collected 25 cents in Brownville, \$1.00 in Adams, 50 cents in Watertown, \$3.47½ in Rutland, and \$1.50 in Brownville. This statement is illuminating in several ways, not the least of which is the illustration it gives of the devotion of the early "preachers," as they were then universally called. Bishop Francis Asbury at one time traversed the region from Plattsburg to Saint Regis.

Prior to the adoption by the state of its present educational system, schools were a local problem. In 1806, a two-story frame building was built in Malone, and known as the Harison Academy until it was chartered as Franklin Academy in 1831. In Saint Lawrence County, Saint Lawrence Academy at Potsdam, organized in 1810, chartered in 1816, and preserving its corporate existence through many years, was probably the earliest educational institution to be organized on a sound and continuing policy. The premises were conveyed, in 1866, to the Potsdam Normal and Training School. The Watertown Academy was incorporated in 1835; the Black River Literary and Religious Institute, incorporated in 1836 under the auspices of the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists, was admitted by the Regents in 1842, changed its name to Jefferson County Institute in 1846, and was succeeded by the Watertown High School in 1865.

The following list of academies reflect the interest of the north country in education:

	<i>Incorporated in</i>
Black River Institute, Jefferson County	1836
Essex County Academy at Westport	1834
Fairfield Academy, Herkimer County	1803
Falley Seminary, Fulton, Oswego County	1836
Fort Covington Academy, Franklin County	1831
Franklin Academy at Malone, Franklin County	1831
Glens Falls Academy, Warren County	1842
Gloversville Union Academy, Fulton County	1855
Gouverneur Union Academy, Saint Lawrence County	1828
Lawrenceville Academy, Saint Lawrence County	1861
Lowville Academy, Lewis County	1808
Mexico Academy, Oswego County	1826
Ogdensburg Academy, Saint Lawrence County	1835
Oswegatchie Academy, Saint Lawrence County	1813
Oswego Academy, Oswego County	1833
Plattsburg Academy, Clinton County	1828
Pulaski Academy, Oswego County	1853
Saint Lawrence Academy, Saint Lawrence County	1816
Ticonderoga Academy, Essex County	1858
Union Academy of Bellville, Jefferson County	1859
Union Literary Society of Bellville, Jefferson County	1826
Warrensburgh Academy, Warren County	1860
Watertown Academy, Jefferson County	1835

The state's educational plan made it necessary for these institutions, and all those subsequently organized, to submit to its control, receiving state aid in return.

Politically, in its early years, northern New York, except for Jefferson and Lewis Counties, was Federalist in its party leanings, cherishing the old principles its settlers had brought

from New England; and the trade restrictions of Jefferson and Madison, as we have seen, deepened their convictions. With the disintegration of the Federalist party after 1815, uncertainty crept in. Antimasonry had its votaries in the twenties and there were newspapers devoted to proclaiming its message in Watertown, Ogdensburg and Potsdam; but the "blessed spirit" ran no such high course in the north country as in the western counties of the state. During the decade, the northernmost counties were divided in party allegiance. Saint Lawrence and Clinton had swung to the Democracy, while the intervening Franklin held to Whig conservatism. At first this seems mysterious. The racial origins were the same; state and national issues did not touch them closely, and certainly not variously. The explanation doubtless lies in three principal personalities, one resident in each county.

The most distinguished figure of the old north country was Silas Wright, born in Massachusetts, educated in Middlebury College, established as a lawyer in Canton shortly before 1820, and then successively state senator, member of Congress, state comptroller, United States senator, and governor of New York. Possibly no man contributed more than he to national Democratic policy in Jackson's and Van Buren's times; he declined a nomination to the Supreme Court of the United States, and in 1844 a nomination actually tendered him, by his party's convention, for the Vice Presidency. President Polk wished to make him his Secretary of the Treasury, but he refused the office. It was natural that his honest competence would hold Saint Lawrence firm in Democratic interest.

Contemporary with Silas Wright was Luther Bradish, a resident of Franklin County from 1826 to 1841. Mr. Bradish's interest in northern New York came through the purchase of lands, beginning as early as 1816, and he became in the years of his residence a leader in thought and action. With Thurlow

Weed, he was one of the organizers of the Antimasonic party, and in 1830 he was the candidate of that party for Congress. He was defeated by William Hogan, of Hogansburg, another of the landholders of that era, a result largely due to the prestige of Andrew Jackson and to the great influence of Silas Wright. Bradish was elected to the Assembly as a Whig, 1835-37, having previously served during the sessions of 1828-30. In the latter year he was the candidate of his party for speaker, but the Whigs having a small representation he became minority leader. The Democratic canal policy of the period, together with the panic of 1837, enabled the Whigs to sweep the state, and Bradish in 1838 was made speaker, the only man from Franklin County who ever attained that position. In that year he became a candidate for governor, but Seward received the nomination; Bradish accepted second place on the ticket and was elected by a plurality of about ten thousand. The same ticket was nominated in 1840, but because of a revulsion in sentiment, due to unpopular policies formulated by Seward, was elected by only about one-half the previous margin, and lost in 1842. Bradish never again appeared actively in the field of politics.

The political leader of Clinton County for many years was Azariah C. Flagg, a Plattsburg editor and an able public financier. Holding office at Albany as secretary of state or comptroller for seventeen years, he added strength to Van Buren's "Regency," and kept a safe majority in the northeast for the Democratic party.

The northern Democrats, it will be noticed, were Van Buren Democrats, and when their chief declared against the annexation of Texas, and then for the Free Soil movement, he spoke their own convictions, for antislavery sentiment was strong throughout the region. It was this issue which united it and brought it readily to join with the new Republican party in the fifties, seldom to forsake it. Preston King, of Ogdensburg,

United States senator during the years of the Civil War, was one of President Lincoln's advisers and supporters; and Roswell P. Flower, elected to the governorship from New York City, is claimed by Jefferson County as a native son. Northern New York has never been able to claim the presidency, but William A. Wheeler of Malone was elected Vice President on the ticket with Rutherford B. Hayes.

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— VII —

THE WAR OF 1812

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THE WAR OF 1812

CAUSES AND OBJECTIVES

FREE trade and sailors' rights!" For over a century, this phrase has expressed the popular conception of the ideal for which Americans fought in the War of 1812. Merchants and sailors had, indeed, suffered grievous wrongs, not only from the British, but from the French as well. From the year 1793, when Great Britain first entered the lists against the revolutionary government of France, Americans, like the people of other neutral states, had found the great belligerents careless of the rights and interests of others. But it was only after the rupture of the Peace of Amiens (1803), that Great Britain and Napoleon inaugurated what appeared to be a competition as to which could inflict greater damage upon neutral commerce. Then, by a series of arbitrary measures, each of the mighty opponents sought to exclude neutral shipping from all intercourse with the other. If an American sea captain obeyed the French decrees, he was promptly pounced upon by the British; while, if he heeded the British Orders in Council, he was liable to be devoured by the French. Napoleon's policy was, if anything, more ruthless than England's, but Britannia ruled the waves and, *ipso facto*, seemed the greater offender. Even more, perhaps, than by her paper blockades of the Continent, did Great Britain offend by her practice of impressments. "Once an Englishman always an Englishman" was the rule, and many a former British subject, legally naturalized in the United States, was hauled from his berth on an American ship and set at uncongenial tasks upon a British man-of-war. Even native-born Americans occasionally suffered a like fate.

American resentment rose and fell, and rose again. It neared the explosion point in 1807, when, in the course of seizing

alleged British deserters, the British "Leopard" fired with deadly effect upon the American naval frigate "Chesapeake." For this indefensible act, the British government made tardy apology and reparation four years later. In the meantime, President Jefferson and his successor, Madison, had tried to bring the belligerents to terms by "peaceable coercion." The Embargo Act of 1807 had ordered American ships to stay at home and had forbidden all exports to the offending powers. Fifteen months later, a milder Non-Intercourse Act had been substituted, and this, except for a few months, had continued in effect against Great Britain until the opening of the war. In the end, the policy may be said to have succeeded, for the Orders in Council were, in effect, suspended on June 16, 1812, two days before Congress declared war (June 18). Telegraphic communication would probably have prevented war. But that war came when British offenses were no worse than they had been at any time in the preceding six years, and that it went on after the suspension of the orders was known, suggests that there were other motives for the declaration of hostilities.

Had the War of 1812 been in reality a war for "free trade and sailors' rights," New York should have supported it with enthusiasm, for New York stood second among the states in maritime interests. Her seaboard metropolis was the largest in the land. In shipping, she stood next to Massachusetts, owning 17 percent (in 1807) of all American tonnage. And in the export trade for 1811, the Treasury's figures showed her first among the states, leading Massachusetts by over a million dollars and Pennsylvania by nearly three millions.

It was not, however, the maritime communities that brought on the war, but rather the states and sections most distant from the seacoast. The War of 1812, while finding its chief official excuse in British interference with American trade and with the rights of American seamen, was, to a large degree, a war

for territorial expansion, engineered by men of Kentucky and the Northwest who were determined to drive the British from Canada, and by southerners who expected to seize the Floridas from England's weak ally, Spain. To say this is not wholly to accept the thesis, put forward at the time by John Randolph, of Virginia, that the war was one of "agrarian cupidity." The frontiersmen had their just grievances against Spain and Great Britain. In particular, the men of the Northwest believed, with some justification, that the British in Canada armed and encouraged the Indians for resistance to the advancing line of American settlements. Tecumseh's attempt to organize the western Indians was attributed to British influence, and frontier resentment was roused to fever pitch by the heavy losses inflicted upon William Henry Harrison's army at the battle of Tippecanoe in November, 1811. Westerners proclaimed that only by expelling the British from Canada, could the frontier enjoy peace and safety.

While the westerners clamored for war, merchants and ship-owners of the East generally opposed it. Federalists sympathized deeply with Great Britain, the "fast-anchored isle," which offered "the world's last hope" against the despotism of Napoleon. Merchants engaged in foreign trade, though they might be injured by British "paper blockades" and inconvenienced by having their sailors carried off to man the royal navy, were generally ready to submit to these difficulties rather than engage in a war which would sweep their ships utterly from the seas.

New York, with its shipping and commercial interests and its western frontier, with its electorate almost equally divided between Federalists and Republicans, was as little able as the nation itself to present a united front toward the war policy or the long-drawn-out attempt at "peaceable coercion" which preceded it. Congress passed the Embargo Act, in December,

1807, ordering American ships to stay in port and prohibiting the export of American products. New York voters expressed their displeasure by electing a Federalist legislature in the following April. De Witt Clinton, would-be Republican boss of the state, issued a manifesto against the embargo. Later, when Governor Tompkins had made known his support of the national administration, Clinton found it necessary to reverse himself; but, as late as the fall of 1812, he, as a candidate for the presidency, gladly accepted the support of anti-war Federalists. Even the New York frontier was deeply divided in sentiment. Peter B. Porter, first elected in 1808 to represent the western district in Congress, became one of the leading advocates of a war of conquest, but there was much frontier sentiment friendly to England and opposed both to commercial restrictions and to war. Such sentiment may have been, in part, imported from New England, whence came many of the pioneers, but much of it sprang from the interests of trade. Only by use of the state militia could the embargo be enforced on Lakes Ontario and Champlain. A petition to Congress, signed by 1,365 residents of Ontario County, complained of the "constrained and sullen inactivity" imposed upon that community by the embargo. D. A. Ogden, of Hamilton (now Waddington) on the Saint Lawrence River, pointed out that the people of his region would lose money if Canada were annexed. Their pot and pearlshes and their lumber, he explained, were received free of duty at Montreal and Quebec; thence they were shipped to England as Canadian products, benefiting by a discriminating duty which made the ashes worth more in Montreal than in New York by ten dollars a ton. Nor was western New York subject to the Indian danger which menaced the frontier in Ohio and the western territories. The Iroquois Indians, subdued and cowed, confined already to insignificant reservations, were almost untouched by Tecumseh's plans for a defen-

sive league. Indeed, in the summer of 1813, the Six Nations (Iroquois) issued a formal declaration of war against Great Britain. In that and the following summer, they performed actual military service under command of Gen. Peter B. Porter.

The rift in feeling, so apparent from the time of the Embargo Act, was accentuated with the declaration of war. Of the 10 Republican congressmen from New York who voted on the measure, 7 voted "Nay" with the Federalists, and they were joined by one of the senators, also a Republican. The April elections had given the Assembly to the Federalists, avowedly the peace party; they were to repeat their triumph a year later, and were to use their control of the lower house to hamper the energetic prosecution of the war. The autumn elections returned a congressional delegation of 19 Federalists to 8 Republicans, and the legislature chose the Federalist, Rufus King, United States Senator to replace the Republican, John Smith. De Witt Clinton, who had been nominated for the presidency by the Republican members of the legislature, on the ground that he would conduct the war more energetically than President Madison, nevertheless accepted the support of the Federalists as the candidate who could be counted upon to make peace. On one theory or the other, or on both combined, he received the electoral vote of the state in the fall of 1812.

THE CONFLICT ON LAND CENTERED IN NEW YORK

Fortunately for the state and the nation, New York's governor gave unwavering support to the national administration in its military measures. Daniel D. Tompkins, son of a Westchester County farmer who had performed valiant service in the Revolution, had been graduated from Columbia College in 1795 and had soon thereafter entered political life as a Republican. He was first elected governor in 1807. Popularly known

as the "farmer's boy," he retained the confidence of the electorate throughout the partisan discussions of the prewar and war periods and was triumphantly reelected in 1810, 1813 and 1816. Confronted during most of the war with a hostile Assembly, hampered by an inadequate staff, an inefficient militia system, and a lack of funds, he devoted his great energy and very considerable ability to the conduct of the war, risking both health and fortune for the cause. The importance of Tompkins' loyalty was proportionate to the part in the war which geography assigned to his state.

From its western extremity to Lake Champlain, the New York frontier was a potential war area. At any point of that long line, attack by land or water was possible, and if enemy territory were to be invaded, the most practicable routes were likewise through New York. New York City, too, lay open to hostile attack by sea. All this had been foreseen since the first talk of war, and something had been done toward making the state secure. In the winter of 1807-8, when war with England seemed likely, the legislature had voted money for the fortification of New York harbor, in coöperation with the national government, and for the establishment of arsenals along the northern frontier. The war scare had blown over, but the authorized work of defense had gone slowly forward. By the opening of 1812, there were state arsenals at New York City, Albany, Plattsburg, Elizabethtown, Russell, Watertown, Rome, Onondaga, Canandaigua and Batavia. The state possessed 10,823 stand of arms, among them 4,000 muskets manufactured by Eli Whitney at New Haven, "equal if not superior to any imported arms," and about 90 light field guns. Fortifications had been erected on Staten Island to command the approach to New York City by way of the Narrows. The militia of the state, including all those liable to be called to the colors, aggregated over 95,000 men, most of them, unfortunately, inadequately trained and



DANIEL D. TOMPKINS
GOVERNOR, 1807-1817

equipped. The lack of proper preparation by the Federal government and the incompetence of the Federal commanders were to throw a burden upon New York which would strain its military machine to the limit.

With the exception of Hull's and Harrison's campaigns in the West, and of the British incursions in the Chesapeake and at New Orleans, all the major land fighting of the war took place either in New York or in neighboring Canadian territory. In this fighting the New York militia played an active but very uneven part. From April, 1812, when, in anticipation of war and by direction of the President, 1,600 state troops were ordered to Sackett's Harbor, Oswego, and the Niagara frontier, to the closing scenes at Fort Erie, Plattsburg, and New York City, War Department records show volunteer enlistments and tours of duty in the militia on the part of the men of New York to a total of 77,896. These figures do not reveal the actual number of individuals who performed military service, since many individuals served more than once; nor do they include the enlistments from New York in the regular army. Since neither the War Department nor the office of the Adjutant General of New York is able to furnish figures of the actual number of New York men who performed militia or volunteer duty, of the number who enlisted in the regular army, or of the number of casualties, these figures must remain in doubt. It is unpleasant to have to record that, until the closing campaigns of the war, the citizen soldiers, in general, were not conspicuous either for discipline or for courage.

The weakness of the militia as a military instrument was due to a variety of causes. Among these was imperfect definition or understanding of its responsibilities and duties. The militia might be called into service, under state law and at state expense, by the governor or by any divisional, brigade or regimental commander, "in case of invasion or other emergency."

It might be called into service by the President of the United States, either directly or through an officer of the United States Army, whenever the United States was invaded or in imminent danger of invasion, and such a call might be served either upon the governor or upon the commander of the appropriate militia unit in the threatened area. In the event of a call from the United States, the cost of the service was borne by the Federal Treasury. These facts should have been plain from the start and to all concerned, but in July, 1813, Governor Tompkins was having to explain to militia officers as far apart as Black Rock and Sag Harbor that they themselves had authority to call out the militia to resist invasion, without specific authority from the governor; and in August, 1814, in the crucial Plattsburg campaign, Major General Mooers of the militia refused a call from General Izard of the regulars on the ground that he needed the consent of the governor, then far away in New York City.

When the militia was called into service, there was no recognized procedure for enforcing obedience to the summons. As a result, during the first year of the war, in the words of Governor Tompkins, "most of the delinquent Militia escaped altogether, to the great annoyance and dissatisfaction of those who did their duty," and with serious results to the morale of the body as a whole. Probably even more serious was the shortness of the term of service. Militiamen in the service of the United States—and most of the war service was of this character—were liable normally for only three months of duty during the year, though if, in the opinion of the President, the public service required it, this period might be extended to six months, which was the maximum. Thus militia armies might melt away overnight, regardless of the need for them; in fact, they did not always wait for the expiration of their period of service. In the fall of 1814, several companies of Rockland County militia stationed at New York, after appealing in vain for permission

to go home and harvest their crops, marched off one night in a body. To their credit it is to be added that, after getting in their crops, they marched back to camp and resumed their military duty.

In theory, each militiaman provided his own musket or rifle. In practice, many members of the body were destitute of weapons, which must therefore be furnished by the state. Frequently the state found it impossible to recover the arms so provided. In October, 1812, Governor Tompkins found that at Sackett's Harbor the "arms and Military stores which were destined for this station, have been so distributed amongst the Inhabitants and officers, that it is probable a great portion will never be regained." Similar conditions existed in Cayuga County; and in August, 1813, the governor was complaining to Brigadier General McClure of "the great waste of State property on the [Niagara] frontier in the campaign of 1812," and demanding of the officers "more system & attention, & more minute & exact reports & returns upon all subjects."

The lack of "system & attention" here complained of was seemingly a characteristic trait of militia officers. Near the end of August, 1812, the adjutant general of the state sent out a circular letter to twenty-one lieutenant colonels commanding as many regiments which had been detached from the militia for service under the United States. Under general orders of June 15 and 18, it had been the immediate duty of these officers to transmit to the adjutant general inspection returns and copies of the muster rolls of the companies in their commands, but at the end of two months no such returns or rolls had been received—a circumstance which had caused "painfull surprise" to the governor as commander in chief.

Of the higher militia officers, few had any real military experience or training. At least one proved egregiously incompetent. Not more than two—Jacob Brown and Peter B. Porter

—can be said to have attained genuine distinction. Brig. Gen. James Wadsworth, who was sent to command at Black Rock in July, 1812, was by his own modest confession so inexperienced in military matters that the governor felt it necessary to send Major General Hall “to render temporary assistance in person,” and also to dispatch his private secretary, one Nicholas Gray, formerly “Lieut General of the Irish patriots,” to assist General Wadsworth in organizing his brigade. General Wadsworth’s inexperience did not prevent him from performing valiant service in the engagement at Queenston Heights; but to build an efficient army out of untrained troops, serving for short terms and commanded by inexperienced officers, was necessarily a difficult business. What might happen under such conditions was seen in tragic form in December, 1813, when Brigadier General McClure, on the Niagara, first allowed his district to be almost denuded of defenders, and then infuriated the enemy by the useless destruction of the Canadian village of Newark. The disaster that ensued is properly attributable to the glaring weaknesses of the militia system. In some respects the “system” worked more wretchedly than in the Revolution.

Defects such as these seriously impaired the effectiveness of the militia as a defensive organization. For purposes of offense — and it must be kept in mind that the War of 1812 began with high hopes for the conquest of Canada — its usefulness was almost destroyed by acceptance of the theory that militia troops could not be ordered outside the borders of the United States. In the closing months of the war, under leadership that inspired confidence, New York militia crossed the Niagara River without objection; but the early attempts to invade Canada, both at Queenston Heights and at the foot of Lake Champlain, were frustrated by the refusal of the militia to cross the frontier. It was obviously difficult to conquer Canada with troops who refused to leave New York.

OBSTACLES AND DISASTERS IN 1812-13

An understanding of the New York campaigns is impossible without some hint of the physical obstacles to success. The frontier that had to be guarded was of enormous length. From Lake Champlain on the east, it extended westward to the Saint Lawrence River, thence along the southern bank of that river and of Lake Ontario to the Niagara River, along the Niagara to Lake Erie, and so to the Pennsylvania border. In the summer and fall of 1812, militia detachments were scattered among at least twenty posts on this long line, separated by wilderness or sparsely populated country, and connected with one another and with Albany or other bases by roads of a most primitive sort, over which they must be supplied with ammunition, rations and pay. Communications were such that even neighboring garrisons were frequently unable to support one another. Troops at Buffalo and Black Rock could do little to succor Manchester (Niagara Falls), Lewiston, and Fort Niagara, because of the wretched state of the road and the fact that the water route lay open to the British. Heavy materials could be transported to the frontier only at an almost prohibitive cost. Thirty-two-pound cannon for the naval vessels on Lake Ontario (each cannon weighing over three tons) were hauled from New York to Sackett's Harbor, at a cost of \$400 each.

Shortage of military equipment, and of funds with which to purchase it, added to the physical difficulties of campaigning. Such deficiencies were sometimes supplied by patriotic individuals. "It must necessarily be that rations must be supplied and contingent expences of Detachments be borne in the first instance by individuals," Governor Tompkins wrote to D. A. Ogden in July, 1812; and in the same letter he thanked Ogden for his "patriotism in furnishing the needful supplies at Hamilton." Such difficulties were needlessly increased by the lack of

coöperation between United States and state officials. Tompkins complained to Secretary of War Eustis that he was unable to obtain certain essential camp equipage in possession of the United States at Albany, because General Dearborn, who commanded the district, was in Boston, and the deputy quartermaster general refused to turn over the material without a written order from his superior. Later in the season, he wrote Gen. Jacob Brown that he had made requisition upon Dearborn for a thousand blankets, watch coats for sentinels, and intrenching tools, but added skeptically: "but like Glendower's spirits, will they come when I do call?"

Under such conditions, a tremendous weight of work, as well as of responsibility, rested upon the governor of the state. In September, 1812, in apologizing to Peter B. Porter for failure to answer his letters, Tompkins wrote:

I frequently have such a pain in the breast by reason of constant writing of General Orders and official papers, that a specific answer to every communication is irksome and almost impracticable. . . . When I inform you that the transportation of Quartermasters' stores, and the payment of all the troops on the Frontier is somehow or other imposed on me, and that my private Secretary is absent, my Commissary journeying to the Westward, and neither the Adjutant Genl or an Aid called into service for my assistance, you will have some charity for my omissions.

With the foregoing facts in mind, and with a knowledge of the further circumstance that the regular Army officers assigned to command in New York during 1812 and 1813 were as incompetent as those of the militia, no one need wonder that the campaigns in the state during those years were almost unmitigated failures. When the war opened the frontier was unguarded, save for a few hundred militia, and troops and military stores were slow in arriving. In August, British forces outnumbered American at every important point on the fron-

tier, and had the British taken the offensive they could hardly have failed to secure Sackett's Harbor and Fort Niagara. In this situation the Americans were saved by an armistice concluded between General Dearborn and Governor General Prevost of Canada upon receipt of news that the Orders in Council had been repealed. This breathing space permitted the strengthening of the frontier posts, and, by the early part of October, Sackett's Harbor was defended by a number of armed vessels, while an army of about 6,000 men, over half of them regulars, had been assembled along the Niagara River from Buffalo to Fort Niagara. Maj. Gen. Stephen Van Rensselaer, the "patron," had been assigned by Governor Tompkins to command all the militia from Saint Regis to Buffalo. He took command at Lewiston, some twenty miles north of Buffalo. He outranked Brig. Gen. Alexander Smyth, who commanded the regulars at Buffalo. Smyth was nominally subject to his orders, but paid no attention to either commands or requests from a militia general. Spurred on by the demands of his subordinates for action and perhaps by whispers that as a prominent Federalist he was lukewarm toward the war, Van Rensselaer resolved to throw his army across the river at the foot of the Niagara Gorge, and seize the enemy position at Queenston and the escarpment above. In the early morning of October 13, about 600 men commanded by Colonel Solomon Van Rensselaer made good a landing on the Canadian shore and, though unable to eject the enemy from Queenston, succeeded in taking possession of the heights and capturing a battery on the mountain side. In the early fighting, Gen. Sir Isaac Brock, the able British commander, was killed by an American bullet. Van Rensselaer's advance was unsupported by Smyth, and the British were thus able to rush reënforcements to Queenston from both ends of their line. It was now that the remainder of Van Rensselaer's force on the American side, with the exception of a few hundred men, re-

fused to go to the support of their comrades, and the invading party, now commanded by Lieut. Col. Winfield Scott, was forced down the escarpment to the river, where no course remained for them but surrender. Individual officers and men, of both the regulars and militia, had fought bravely, but the outcome was a humiliating defeat. As a result of lack of coöperation by the officers and cowardice or lack of discipline in the men, an American force totaling some 6,000 had been worsted by 1,600 British, with a loss in killed, wounded and captured, approximating 1,000 men.

General Van Rensselaer resigned his command, which devolved upon General Smyth. Smyth issued magniloquent proclamations and made a few gestures toward Canada, at one time going so far as to get 1,200 men in boats at Black Rock, only to order them to "disembark and dine." His most martial achievement was a bloodless duel with Peter B. Porter, who had branded him a coward; and shortly thereafter he disappeared from the scene, amid a fusillade of musket shots from an army that had become unruly and contemptuous of its commander.

So the year 1812 closed on the Niagara. Events on Lake Champlain, where Gen. Henry Dearborn commanded in person, were less spectacular but no more successful. On November 19, Dearborn led an army, composed of regulars and militia, northward to the Canadian line. There the militia refused to advance farther, and on the twenty-third the army returned to Plattsburg and to winter quarters. The British had not remained wholly on the defensive. A naval attack by several British vessels upon Sackett's Harbor had been beaten off (July 19), and Jacob Brown, brigadier general of militia, had repulsed a raid of 700 British troops at Ogdensburg (October 4); but these minor defensive victories constituted the only American claims to glory as the year closed.

The year 1813 was even more inglorious, and ended with the

most serious disaster that New York suffered during the war. John Armstrong, a New Yorker, succeeded the incompetent Eustis as Secretary of War, on February 5. Armstrong saw correctly that the proper way to conquer Upper Canada was to close the Saint Lawrence River, thus severing the communications of that region. He projected an attack upon the British naval base at Kingston at the head of the river, which, had it been successfully carried out, must have been decisive in the western theater of war. But the American officers on the spot, General Dearborn and Capt. Isaac Chauncey, who commanded the fleet at Sackett's Harbor, preferred another plan, to which Armstrong consented. On April 22, when Lake Ontario was free of ice, the American fleet put to sea, carrying an army of 1,600 men. Proceeding up the lake to York (later Toronto), the American force, on April 27, dispersed the small garrison at that place and destroyed the public property, including the Houses of Parliament of Upper Canada—an almost fruitless victory, which cost heavily in casualties. Thereafter Dearborn and Chauncey proceeded to the mouth of the Niagara River, where they captured Fort George (May 27). The British garrison escaped, and later worsted the Americans in the battles of Stony Creek and Beaver Dam. In shifting their force to the western end of the lake, Dearborn and Chauncey had left their base, Sackett's Harbor, defended by some 400 regulars and a few hundred volunteers and militia, with Brig. Gen. Jacob Brown, of the New York militia, in command. Thus the American headquarters and principal naval station on Lake Ontario lay open to attack by the British fleet and army at Kingston. Sir George Prevost, governor general of Canada and British commander in chief, accepted the invitation, and on May 28 landed 800 men at Sackett's Harbor under the guns of the fleet. Thanks to the excellent generalship of Brown, who in consequence won a brigadier general's commission in the regular

army, the attack was repulsed with heavy losses, but not until a naval lieutenant, taking fright, had set fire to the marine barracks, shipping and naval storehouses.

Because of illness and demonstrated incompetence, General Dearborn was relieved of his command, and in August Gen. James Wilkinson arrived at Sackett's Harbor and took command of the Ninth Military District, comprising New York north of the Highlands and also Vermont. The change in commanders produced no improvement, for Wilkinson, besides being as weak as Dearborn, had defects of character which had long since destroyed all respect for him in the Army. To make matters worse, Maj. Gen. Wade Hampton, who was placed in command of the army at Plattsburg, had an old feud with Wilkinson, which rendered coöperation between the two impossible. Nor was the situation improved when Secretary Armstrong came to Sackett's Harbor to direct operations in person. After hesitating between Kingston and Montreal as the objectives of an offensive campaign, Armstrong and Wilkinson at length agreed that the army at Sackett's Harbor should descend the Saint Lawrence, while Hampton should lead his contingent north from Plattsburg to a junction with Wilkinson, as a preliminary to a combined attack upon Montreal. The entire plan was ill-conceived and promised failure, if not disaster. Apparently Armstrong knew this, and no sooner was Wilkinson's campaign launched than the Secretary of War retreated to Washington, leaving the responsibility of failure to his subordinates. Wilkinson's army, on a flotilla of bateaux, entered the Saint Lawrence on November 5. Wilkinson and his second in command, Gen. Morgan Lewis (a former governor of New York), fell ill. British gunboats and troops harassed the flotilla from flank and rear. On November 11, at Chryslers Field, 800 British and Canadian troops, with a few Indians, routed 2,000 American regulars. Two days later, Wilkinson

moved his expedition up the Salmon River to French Mills, in New York, where they went into winter quarters. At the same time, Hampton, who had crossed the Canadian line to the eastward, fell back to Plattsburg. Not only had the campaign ended in utter failure, but there seemed danger that the Army itself might disintegrate. From Albany, Governor Tompkins wrote Armstrong, on December 24:

The officers have passed thro this place in shoals. Some suppose they are going to Washington to snort forth their own merits, exploits & claims to promotion; others that they go to expouse [*sic*] the cause of their respective Commanders, & a few believe they are running, or shirking (as they call it) from duty. At any rate the absence of so many of them at this particular juncture creates great apprehension & dissatisfaction in the public mind.

VICTORIES IN 1814

While all attempts to invade Canada were proving unsuccessful, the people of New York were experiencing enemy forays on their own soil. On February 23, 1813, a British party from Prescott had crossed the Saint Lawrence on the ice, driven the garrison from Ogdensburg, and destroyed the public property there. On July 11, a British and Canadian force of some 250 men crossed the Niagara River below Black Rock and, after burning the barracks and a blockhouse at that place, were repulsed with severe losses by a similar number of regulars and militia led by Peter B. Porter. In the same month, a British fleet gained the mastery on Lake Champlain, destroyed American shipping, burned the barracks at Plattsburg and plundered the magazines. But the chief disaster was reserved for the end of the year. The campaign on the Saint Lawrence denuded the Niagara frontier of defenders and, when the campaign closed, it apparently occurred to no Federal officer that regular troops

might be needed there. Some 300 regulars there were, scattered along the thirty-mile line from Fort George to Buffalo, and a few state militia and volunteers, whose terms of enlistment were expiring—all under the command of Brigadier General McClure, of the New York militia. McClure had authority from the governor to call out as many militia as were needed to secure the frontier, authority which he apparently did not use. Early in December, the British moved troops to within ten miles of Fort George. On the tenth, McClure evacuated the post and retired across the Niagara River, but, before crossing, he committed the utterly useless crime of setting fire to the Canadian villages of Newark and Queenston, turning out the inhabitants in the winter cold. McClure himself went on to Buffalo and thence eastward, leaving Fort Niagara in charge of a subordinate. British vengeance was not long in coming. During the night of December 18-19, two British armies crossed the river between Fort Niagara and Lewiston. One, under Colonel Murray, surprised and captured Fort Niagara, bayoneting 79 of the defenders and capturing military stores to the value, as estimated by the captors, of from £150,000 to £200,000 sterling. The other invading party, commanded by General Riall and including a large number of Indians, fell first upon the village of Lewiston, and in the next two days laid waste the country along the river as far south as Tonawanda Creek. They then retired across the river, but, on the night of the twenty-ninth, another crossing was effected at Black Rock. The small militia force gathered by Maj. Gen. Amos Hall was easily dispersed, and Black Rock and Buffalo were burned. The scene of devastation extended from Lake Ontario to Eighteen-Mile Creek, south of Buffalo.

Governor Tompkins, in Albany, received news of the capture of Fort Niagara on December 24. He at once rushed military supplies to Canandaigua and ordered General Hall to make

use of his entire division of militia, if necessary, and to exert himself to the utmost to repel the invasion. Upon receiving word, on January 2, that Buffalo and Black Rock had fallen, he urged upon the Secretary of War a vigorous counterstroke, either toward Kingston or on the Niagara, pledging himself to raise 5,000 militia for the purpose, and warning Armstrong that unless something were done speedily and effectually, "the confidence of the citizens of this quarter of the United States in the Government will be lost." The appeal produced no result. The Niagara frontier was left to the protection of General Hall's militia until spring. In March, the governor called for two regiments of volunteers from the state at large, to serve under Gen. Peter B. Porter, and to relieve the sorely harassed militia of the western district. This appeal, too, appears to have been ineffective, for when an army assembled on the Niagara River in June, Porter's small command was composed largely of Six Nations Indians and Pennsylvania militia. It was not until the end of March that General Brown, with a part of Wilkinson's former army, arrived at Buffalo. Brown returned for a time to Sackett's Harbor, leaving in command at Buffalo the young brigadier, Winfield Scott, who began drilling his small force into a real army, which was to give a good account of itself during the next campaign.

Meanwhile the legislature of New York had appropriated \$50,000 for the relief of the victims of the British invasion. The Common Council of New York City appropriated \$3,000 for the same purpose and resolved that Wednesday, February 2, should be a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, on which the people of the city should abstain from business and assemble at their churches for religious services. The Protestant clergy, however, not liking to take orders from the Common Council, resolved that they were not "able to perceive that a distant local calamity, however severe, creates any peculiar obligation to

observe a day of local fasting and humiliation in a spot at the opposite extremity of the State," and therefore declined to carry out the behest of the city fathers. The churches of the city did, however, contribute nearly \$1,300 for the Niagara sufferers, and private contributions from the city amounted to more than \$5,000.

Up to the early summer of 1814, little can be said of the behavior of the troops on the New York frontier, either regulars or militia, save that, incompetently led, they had been no worse than their leaders. The events of that summer were to show that they could respond nobly to a brave and vigorous leadership. At the outset, the summer seemed to promise only continued and intensified disaster. In April, the European war ended, and thousands of British troops, veterans of Wellington's Peninsular campaign, were soon on their way to America. It seemed that the odds were to be overwhelming on the British side. In May, Commodore Yeo, for the moment superior to Chauncey on Lake Ontario, scoured the lake, raided Oswego, the source of supplies for the American base at Sackett's Harbor, and captured or destroyed four schooners and a large supply of provisions. It was not until August that Chauncey, in the seesaw of naval construction that marked the whole war on that lake, was able to chase Yeo back to Kingston. In May, also, another British fleet cruised at will on Lake Champlain. The growing British army derived much of its subsistence from the not-unwilling farmers and stock raisers of Vermont and northern New York. The high roads were found insufficient, wrote an American officer in July, "for the supplies & cattle that are pouring into Canada."

The Lake Champlain route, offering both subsistence and easy passage, was the obvious road for a British invasion of New York, and there the defense should have been concentrated. But until September, American eyes were fixed again upon the

Niagara frontier. Wilkinson's army at French Mills had been broken up in February. The greater part of it was moved to Plattsburg, and there, after Wilkinson had again marched to the Canadian line and back, the command was turned over to Gen. George Izard. The smaller portion, under Jacob Brown, promoted to a major-generalship in January, was sent first to Sackett's Harbor and then to Buffalo, where Brown took command in June. "Wherever Brown went," writes Henry Adams, "fighting followed."

The strategy of the War Department in sending Brown's army across the Niagara River, when the imperative need was for defense on Lake Champlain, is of a piece with most of its planning during these years. Materially, the campaign accomplished little save to keep a few thousand British troops busy in that area, but the moral results were magnificent. When Brown invaded Canada on July 3, 1814, he commanded about 2,750 regular troops, fit for duty, about 800 militia and volunteers from New York and Pennsylvania, and some 600 Indians of the Six Nations. The regulars, mostly New England and Pennsylvania troops, though including one New York regiment, the Twenty-third, were commanded by two able young brigadiers, Scott and Ripley. The militia and the Indians were well led by Peter B. Porter. It was the best army assembled during the war, and owed much of its spirit to its commander, Jacob Brown. "Among all the American major-generals," says Adams, "he alone made raw troops as steady as grenadiers, and caused militia to storm entrenched lines held by British regulars." Scott and Porter seconded Brown's fighting spirit, while Ripley supplied an element of judicial caution which gave balance to the combination.

The story of the campaign must be briefly told. A brilliant victory won by Scott at Chippewa, on July 5, was followed, twenty days later, by the sanguinary battle at Lundy's Lane.

Here Brown's army, after driving the British from a strong position and capturing their artillery, found themselves so weakened that they were unable to hold the ground gained and executed an orderly and unmolested retreat in the darkness. Besieged in Fort Erie by a superior British force, the Americans, on August 15, beat off a British assault with heavy losses; and on September 17, in a daring sortie, penetrated the enemy lines, disabled part of their artillery, and so weakened the enemy force that the British general, Drummond, abandoned the siege and retreated to a camp fifteen miles distant. Prior to the last action, 1,500 New York militia had been induced to cross the river and join Porter's command. About a thousand of these, as well as the New Yorkers of the Twenty-third Regiment, followed Porter in the sortie and gave a good account of themselves. "The militia of New York have redeemed their character," wrote Brown to Governor Tompkins, "they behaved gallantly." This was a welcome note in the reports. Among those killed in the militia brigade was Brigadier General Daniel Davis, of Batavia.

While these stirring events were occurring on the Niagara, the British had gathered some 18,000 veteran troops between Montreal and Lake Champlain, for an invasion much more serious than any predatory raid. To face them, General Izard had at Plattsburg about 7,000 troops of varying quality, and in Plattsburg Bay was Macdonough's little naval squadron, statistically inferior to the British fleet. As if to remove the sole excuse the British might plead in case of defeat, Secretary Armstrong, on August 12, ordered Izard with his main force to Sackett's Harbor on Lake Ontario, 280 miles distant. Izard's departure, on August 29, left at Plattsburg some 3,300 men, of whom only about 1,500 were fit for duty. The order for this move was given without notice to Governor Tompkins. Major General Mooers, of the militia, refused Izard's request

for militia for Plattsburg, as we have seen, until he could get the governor's approval. Tompkins did not learn of the situation till September 2. He at once instructed Mooers to send the militia asked for, but few of these arrived in time to take part in the battle.

Eleven thousand British troops, commanded by Sir George Prevost, crossed the line into New York on September 3. They came on with confidence, for the only obstacles to their success were the little fleet under Macdonough on the lake and the insignificant army—planted, it is true, behind excellent fortifications at Plattsburg. The complete collapse of Prevost's invasion and his precipitate retreat to Canada must be attributed primarily to the skill of the young naval officer Macdonough, whose careful preparations made possible the destruction of the superior British fleet in the engagement of September 11, thus laying open the British communications to attack from the lake. The assault on the works at Plattsburg, where Alexander Macomb commanded, was not pressed. In such land fighting as there was, the New York militia, now seasoned by experience, won honorable mention.

The battle of Plattsburg, on September 11, and the sortie at Fort Erie, on September 17, practically closed the war on the northern and western frontiers of New York. There was apprehension of an attack at Sackett's Harbor, and militia units were called out for its defense, but no attack came. General Izard eventually reached Buffalo, where he took command, only to furnish a weak anticlimax to Brown's summer campaign. Fort Erie was blown up and abandoned on November 5. On the other hand, Fort Niagara, which the British had taken in December, 1813, remained in their possession till the close of the war. We may now turn to examine the events of the war in New York City.

DEFENSE OF NEW YORK CITY

News of the declaration of war, arriving at New York by mail on the morning of June 20, 1812, found the city ill-prepared to resist a possible attack. Recollections of the ease with which the British had taken the city in 1776 had not availed to stimulate adequate measures of defense. It had been deemed sufficient to fortify the Narrows on the Staten Island side, rendering naval attack from that quarter improbable, but the approach by the East River was undefended, and there was nothing to prevent a land attack by way either of Long Island or of Westchester. There were four arsenals in the city, three of the United States and one of the state, a fort on the Hudson off Hubert Street, and other forts or batteries at Castle Garden, and on Governor's, Bedloe's, Ellis, and Staten Islands, mounting in all some 284 guns, but with no adequate number of trained artillerists to serve them. Of naval defense there was none that could give pause to a formidable enemy squadron. The few frigates and sloops of war, present when war began, promptly put to sea, leaving about thirty tiny gunboats to supplement the land defenses.

De Witt Clinton, who throughout the war was mayor of the city, and the Common Council were prompt in calling the attention of the governor and the War Department to the weak state of the city's defenses, and some measures were taken to strengthen them. The legislature had, on June 12, appropriated \$25,000 for completion of the works on Staten Island. A new fort on the Hudson, at Gansevoort Street, was completed by the United States government in November—seemingly a rather useless enterprise—and in January, 1813, the War Department commenced a work on Hendrick's reef, on the Long Island side of the Narrows. Such work progressed slowly, and it was not until the summer of 1814 that energetic measures were taken

to protect the East River and the land approaches to the city. The forts in existence were manned, however, and by the middle of September, 1812, about 3,500 troops, the majority of them New York and New Jersey militia, were in service in the city and at points about the harbor.

The defense of the city and the harbor was assigned in the first instance to General Armstrong, who commanded there for the United States from August, 1812, until he became Secretary of War in the following February. In March, 1813, New York below the Highlands became part of the newly created Third Military District and was commanded in turn by Generals Izard, Dearborn, and Morgan Lewis, and from October 23, 1814, to the end of the war by Governor Tompkins, who served in that capacity without holding a commission in the United States Army. Activity on the frontiers diverted attention from New York City, which was left to shift largely for itself till the closing months of the war.

The only attention which the British deigned to pay to the city was by way of blockade, and even this was for a long time slack. A British squadron was stationed from the beginning off Sandy Hook, and made entry by the front door difficult; but until December, 1813, Long Island Sound was left practically open, and an active coasting trade was kept up with the unblockaded New England ports. Even privateers passed out without much difficulty by this channel. One hundred and twenty such vessels from New York put to sea during the war, and took 275 prizes, of which 48 were brought into New York for adjudication. After 1813, both privateering and trade were practically ended. Long before that, trade had, of course, been badly crippled; in September, 1813, there were laid up, at the Hudson docks, 122 dismantled ships and brigs and 18 sloops and schooners. Unemployment, coupled with high prices of articles ordinarily brought by sea – and even of firewood – neces-

sitated much charitable activity. In December, 1813, there was formed a Fuel Association, with one member for each ward, to supply fuel for the indigent. Between that date and March, 1814, it collected over \$4,500 in money, beside direct donations of wood, and distributed 1,315 loads of wood to about three thousand addresses. Concerts and public entertainments were given to raise money for charitable purposes. The Common Council voted (January 24, 1814) an appropriation of \$2,000 to be distributed equally among the ten wards, and such organizations as the Washington Benevolent Society organized relief for their indigent members.

The overthrow of Napoleon was greeted with mingled feelings by the good people of New York City. News of the fallen emperor's exile to Elba arrived on June 10, 1814. The Federalists prepared a celebration of the event for June 29. Gouverneur Morris delivered a long oration, full of praise for the Bourbons and legitimate princes generally, which fell strangely from the lips of a patriot of the American Revolution. A public dinner followed, with Rufus King presiding, at which toasts were drunk to the sovereigns of the nations which had joined to overthrow the usurper, a list from which the King of Great Britain must by a painful effort have been excluded. The only note of warning was sounded by Gen. Ebenezer Stevens of the militia, who proposed as a toast: "The Events We Celebrate—Should they unexpectedly produce for our country a dishonorable demand, may it unite a free people as capable to defend their honor as to acquire their independence."

For all but violent Federalist partisans, the news was a danger signal, for should England now choose to land a veteran army at New York, the city lay defenseless, and it was known that thousands of experienced troops were on their way to America. Early in July, British ships appeared in more than

usual force off Sandy Hook and in Gardiner's Bay. The Common Council (July 6) appointed a committee consisting of the mayor and two aldermen to confer with the governor and General Lewis and report on the city's defenses. The committee reported, on July 14, that there was nothing to stop an enemy attack by the East River or by land, that the troops in the city were inadequate and so distributed as to make rapid concentration impossible, and that the 13,500 militia which the state had been ordered to hold ready for Federal service could not be assembled in less than three or four weeks, and when assembled would be without discipline or confidence in one another. They recommended that aid be sought of both the Federal and state governments, looking to an adequate provision of troops and munitions and specifically to the establishment of fortified camps on Harlem and Brooklyn Heights to guard the land approaches to the city.

In response to this appeal, aid came from both state and national governments. Three thousand militia from the Hudson River counties were called into Federal service, on August 4, and an additional thousand into the service of the state, all of them to serve at New York. Plans were prepared for earthworks on the heights overlooking the Harlem River and at Brooklyn, and a citizens' committee undertook to supply voluntary workers to erect them. Various organizations, trade and political, sent contingents to the work, and tanners, plumbers, and law students wielded pick and shovel side by side with Republican sons of Tammany and Federalists of the Washington Benevolent Society. It was even reported that, on one day, between two and three hundred ladies from New York City performed an hour's work on the Brooklyn defenses. Meanwhile, the works on both sides of the Narrows were being strengthened; a blockhouse was erected at the entrance to

Jamaica Bay; and the approach by Hell Gate was guarded by a battery at Hallet's Point and another at Mill Rock in the channel.

The work of defense was further stimulated by the news of the disaster of Bladensburg and the capture and burning of Washington, which reached New York on August 26. General Lewis at once agreed to call upon the governor for the state's full quota of 13,500 militia to be taken into Federal pay, and an additional 5,000 from New Jersey, and the Common Council voted to borrow, on the credit of the corporation, a million dollars to be advanced to the state or Federal authorities for their pay. Both the city and several of the city banks made heavy loans in the ensuing weeks upon the security of Treasury notes, backed by Governor Tompkins' endorsement. Troops poured into the city. At the end of September, Governor Tompkins reported 17,650 state troops in service at New York, and it was estimated that an army of 25,000 men could be concentrated on the defenses within three hours. How well organized and efficient these masses of militia were can only be conjectured, for they were never put to the test of combat. The enemy did not appear, and the soldiers were left at leisure to quarrel with the contractors and their agents over defective rations, samples of which they sometimes exhibited on poles for the edification of their officers and the public. Solomon Van Rensselaer, adjutant general of the state, reported in a private letter of November 14, that the militia at New York were "sickly and heartily tired of a military life; desertions are frequent and furloughs asked for by dozens every day." The regular troops at the Narrows, on the other hand, he thought "performed well and looked like soldiers."

It was not until early in November that the fortifications about the city were regarded as completed. By this time the panic had ceased, for it was known that the British had their

eyes upon other objectives. The terms of service of the three-months troops were expiring, and they were allowed to disperse to their homes. By December, New York City had ceased to be a fortified camp. It is worthy of remark that the city had not been put into anything resembling an adequate state of defense until two years and five months after the declaration of war.

PEACE AND THE RESULTS OF THE WAR

It was not only in New York City and in Brown's army that the closing months of the war were marked by a new vigor. For the first time since hostilities began, the governor had a legislature willing to back an energetic policy. It has been stated that in the state elections in April, 1812, and a year later, the Federalists won and held control of the Assembly. The result was not only that most of the governor's proposed war legislation was blocked in the lower house, but also that the Federalists controlled the Council of Appointment and so were able to override his wishes in the appointment of both civil and military officers. This difficulty was less serious than might be supposed, for while the Council might appoint the militia officers, it rested with the governor to assign them to duty and to make temporary promotions by use of the brevet. Thus, rightly or wrongly, De Witt Clinton, though he held a major general's commission in the militia, was never able to persuade Tompkins to assign him to active duty. But there was no way in which the governor could overcome the refusal of the Assembly to pass needful legislation.

It was, therefore, a source of much gratification when the election of April, 1814, returned a legislature Republican in both branches. The Republican victory had been forecast in December, 1813, when at a special election for a member of

Congress the district comprising eight wards of New York City replaced a Federalist with a Republican. In April the Republicans swept the state, and when Tompkins called the new legislature in special session in September, he found it ready to put through all his proposals. Laws were then passed which would have been highly important had the war continued into the following year. The most significant of them, and the special favorite of Tompkins, was a law for classifying the militia. Its purpose was twofold: first, to provide an efficient body of troops obligated to serve for two years instead of the three or six months fixed by the existing law; second, to distribute the burden of militia service more equitably in proportion to wealth. With these ends in view, it was provided that the persons subject to militia duty should be divided into 12,000 classes, each class representing as nearly as possible an equal amount of property. Each class would then be called upon to furnish one man for two years of service, the cost of such service, in the form of a bounty or hire for a substitute, to be apportioned among the members of the class according to their means. This measure became law on October 24, 1814. Martin Van Buren, who sponsored it in the Senate, declared that it "excited the indignation of the wealthy classes generally, and particularly of those among them who were opposed to the war." Other laws passed at the special session provided for the raising of sea fencibles for the defense of New York City and harbor; for the enlistment of two regiments of colored men for three years, the slaves among them to be rewarded with freedom at the end of their period of service; for higher pay for the militia; for the better enforcement of militia duty and the prohibitions against trading with the enemy; and for the reimbursement to the Corporation of New York and to Governor Tompkins of money advanced or spent for defense purposes.

The Republican victories in April and November, 1814, were not the only indications that Federalist opposition to the war was weakening. While extremists in the party, like Gouverneur Morris, were hailing the Hartford Convention as "a star in the East . . . the dayspring of freedom and glory," the more moderate Rufus King was lending his support to Tompkins and urging him to exceed his constitutional powers, if necessary, to make secure the defenses of the state. There seemed a growing tendency for parties and factions to unite in the face of threatened disaster.

On February 11, 1815, the British sloop of war "Favorite" arrived off Sandy Hook with the treaty of peace—a treaty which settled none of the points over which the United States had gone to war, yet was hailed with joy, and ushered in a long period of good relations with Great Britain. Eight days later, on a Sunday, came the report of its ratification in Washington. The Common Council of the city at first set February 22 as a day of celebration, but when good Republicans objected that this was the day preëmpted by the Federalist Washington Benevolent Society for its annual dinner, the city fathers changed the date to the twenty-seventh, so that even the date might be free of any taint of Federalism.

The troubles of Governor Tompkins did not end with the war. Through his hands had passed enormous sums of money, both state and national, and, in the last months of the war, he had used his credit to the limit in borrowing money for public use. His accounts had, in the press of business, been none too carefully kept, and he found himself in difficulties with his creditors and with both state and national governments. Unfortunately, his accounts with the state became involved in partisan politics, and though they were eventually adjusted, the charges and countercharges of the controversy and the accompanying financial difficulties were instrumental, according

to contemporary opinion, in bringing him to intemperance and a premature grave. He died in 1825, after serving two terms as Vice President of the United States.

The people of the state showed little disposition to reward military service with political preferment. General Brown, the one outstanding military figure whom the New York militia had produced, remained in the regular Army, which he commanded from 1821 to his death in 1828. Peter B. Porter, who had served as quartermaster general of the state in the early months of the war and had shown ability later as a commander of militia and volunteers, was defeated by Clinton for the governorship in 1817, and never thereafter held high elective office. With the decline of the Federalist party, the rising figures in New York politics were De Witt Clinton, who had been denied military command, and Martin Van Buren, who had supported Tompkins' war policy in the state senate, but had performed no military service.

For the state as a whole, the wounds of war were quickly healed. By most of its people the war had not been grievously felt. The trade of the metropolis had suffered, and a few counties had experienced varying degrees of devastation, but manufactures had flourished and farmers had found a ready market for their products, sometimes, as has been said, on the wrong side of the international boundary. The destruction on the Niagara frontier was quickly repaired. A visitor in 1816 wrote that Buffalo "is now not merely a flourishing village but a considerable town, with shops and hotels which might anywhere be called handsome and in this part of the country astonishing."

The cost of the war to the state, in dollars and cents, was estimated as follows by Governor Clinton, in 1818:

Expenditures for fortifications, arsenals, magazines, ordnance, arms, ammunition, and other

warlike stores, pay of militia, volunteers, and sea fencibles	\$ 846,350.83
Direct taxes paid by the state to the national government for war purposes	\$1,113,126.23
	<hr/>
Total	\$1,959,477.06

With Clinton's rise to the governorship (1817), there was inaugurated the canal era, which was to bring vast development to the central and western portions of the state and unprecedented volumes of trade to New York City. With growing population, manufactures, agriculture and trade, the state was at the threshold of an era of great prosperity.

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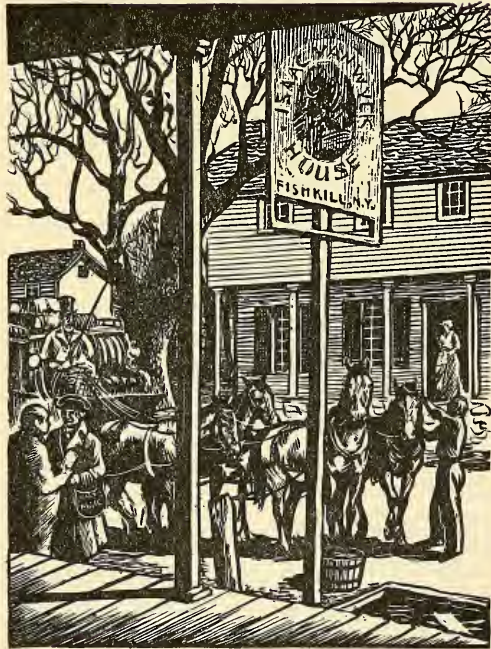
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THE TURNPIKE ERA

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Columbia University Press



THE TURNPIKE ERA

PIONEER TRANSPORTATION

IN THE first half of the nineteenth century, New York witnessed rapid changes in modes of transportation. The opening decade saw the turnpike movement well under way. In the second decade, steamboats proved their practicality. The third decade witnessed canals at the height of their popularity, while the fourth decade found them eclipsed in public favor by railroads. The fifth decade saw the beginnings of an amazing, though short-lived, plank-road movement. The half century was one of experimentation and constant adjustment, as each mode struggled to find its place in the transportation system. The eventual victory of the railroads was so complete that for the next half century their supremacy was not challenged, and other modes of transportation fell into disuse or became supplementary in character. For several generations, the transportation pattern was so stable that the ordinary person must have thought of it as a fixed and settled matter. But the first half of the twentieth century again represents a period of change and competition in transportation methods that recalls the first half of the nineteenth, and gives to the latter's problems an interest and importance somewhat beside that of mere historical record.

As long as settlement in New York hugged the Hudson and Mohawk Valleys, transport problems were not difficult to solve. Many conditions of the true frontier were scarcely known along the Hudson because the river made travel to and from the metropolis easy and common, and because the country gentlemen along the river could market their produce from their own landings and, in turn, could import the articles of necessity and luxury that were appropriate to their way of living.

A handsome profit was possible on such easy trade, and it is not too much to say that the Hudson enabled a country gentry to develop in early New York.

But, at the turn of the century, settlement was pushing rapidly into the fertile western districts of the state. Year by year, the roads back to the market towns on the Hudson grew longer. The age of the "long haul" for the farmers of the frontiers had begun. Only as they could get their products to the river did they have value, for frontiersmen all raised or made the same products, and had little reason to trade among themselves. Their few necessary importations and the little luxuries which brightened life must all come from the Hudson towns. The earlier decades were a period of rapid growth for such river markets as Troy, Albany, Hudson, Catskill, Poughkeepsie, Kingston and Newburgh. But their growth and the westward movement were both endangered by diminishing returns as the highways lengthened. There were indications that settlement had reached its limit unless improvements in transportation were forthcoming. The situation is echoed in a speech before Congress in 1810 delivered by Peter B. Porter, one of the first statesmen of the New York frontier:

The great evil, and it is a serious one indeed, under which the inhabitants of the western country labor arises from the want of a market . . . such is the present difficulty and expense of transporting their produce to an Atlantic port that little benefit is realized from that quarter. The single circumstance of want of a market is already beginning to produce the most disastrous effects, not only on the industry, but on the morals of the inhabitants. Such is the fertility of their lands, that one-half of their time spent in labor is sufficient to produce every article, which their farms are capable of yielding, in sufficient quantities for their own consumption, and there is nothing to incite them to produce more. They are, therefore, naturally led to spend the other part of their time in idleness and dissipation.

An anonymous writer of the day emphasizes the moral degeneration (*American Medical and Philosophical Register*, I, 1810, 155):

We know that people who live far from markets and cannot sell their produce, naturally become indolent and vicious—There are people in the western country, settled on a bountiful soil, who do not raise a bushel of grain except what is eaten by the family, or what is made into whiskey, for the purpose of drowning thought and destroying soul and body.

Such pictures are of an atrophic society, in need of the nourishing blood of trade. One begins to understand why "internal improvements" were the chief domestic issue in the politics of the day. The westward movement was effectually retarded until improvements in transportation lessened the cost and difficulty of reaching a market. Railroads were not yet thought of. Canals, though considered, were as yet rejected because of their expense. The improvement had to come on the highways. But the frontier communities were too poor to build costly highways, and so was the state. As McMaster says (*History of the People of the United States*, III, 461): "The heaviest tax that could have been laid would not have sufficed to cut half the roads or build half the bridges that were required." The solution was to come through the enlistment of private capital in turnpike companies, which provided the first good roads the state was to know.

It is difficult for this generation to have a proper conception of the roads which preceded the turnpike era. New York was a forest-covered state. Pioneer roads were usually "underbrushed" through, which meant that the undergrowth and small trees were cut away and the swamps "corduroyed." Large trees were circumvented. There were no bridges, but the banks at the fords were cut down, making them passable in

good seasons of the year and in daylight. The old Chautauqua Road, which was opened by the Holland Land Company in 1812 to run from Canandaigua and Geneseo to the southwestern corner of the state, and which was the great route of travel for emigrants into northern Ohio until the canal was completed in 1825, was such a road; and so was that from Canandaigua by the head of Conesus Lake to Olean, on the Allegheny River, opened by order of the legislature in 1810, and accommodating the great tide of emigrant travel that, embarking at Olean, floated down the Allegheny and Ohio Rivers.

The next stage in the development of a forest road still left much to be desired. If the trees were removed from the track, frequently their stumps remained. Other trees growing near the path sent their roots into it, so that horses were likely to stumble and slip on them. Such roads held their mud and puddles interminably, because the sun could not get through the trees to dry them. Especially in the low places the rich vegetable soil soaked up and long retained the moisture. Corduroy causeways across every marsh and miry low place, rapidly built with uneven poles, furnished a slippery footing for the horses. In the older settlements they were covered with soil, but this washed away and the sticks broke and rotted until they were dangerous in the extreme. Bridges were still rare, and those that existed were often objects of dread. Sometimes they were of poles instead of planks. They washed away with each freshet and frequently were not replaced for weeks. Timothy Dwight, who traveled much in the newly-settled parts of New York, wrote that the inhabitants were "so much occupied in subduing their farms, and in providing sustenance for their families that it is a long time between when any repairs are made" (*Travels*, II, 130 ff.).

If the roads were primitive in the newer districts, they were only a little better in the older regions of the state. The forests

might be cleared on both sides of the way, but the increased travel still made the roads bad in certain seasons and after heavy rains. Especially the heavily-loaded wagons, on the main highways to market, plowed the rich natural earth until it was all but bottomless. Sand created different problems. Hills were as yet little cut down, and New York had thousands of them. The farmers along the highways complained of having to keep the roads in repair for long-distance freighting which did the greatest damage, but contributed no financial support. The merchant in the city profited most of all, but he also contributed nothing. As for the settler on the distant frontier, it was little wonder that he preferred to drink his surplus in the form of whiskey rather than to face a hundred miles of such roads.

The impossibility of a frontier community building and keeping in repair all the roads it needed, and the breakdown of local maintenance on important routes in the older districts, had forced the state to give attention to roads before the turnpike period arrived. The matter of state aid for highways was before the legislature in some form every year after 1789, when the first state aid was granted in the form of 50,000 acres of public land set aside to provide compensation for persons opening new roads or building bridges on what was still state land. In 1797, resort was had to lotteries, in those days a favorite way of raising money for any uncommon expenditure. About one-third of the income from three successive lotteries of \$15,000 each was used to open the Great Genesee Road from Utica west to Geneva. A fourth of the sum was used on two routes between Albany and Lake Champlain, and other amounts were expended upon the Cherry Valley Road and the road leading west from Catskill.

On the Great Genesee Road, the lottery proceeds were supplemented by 4,000 days of labor subscribed and cheerfully

performed by inhabitants of the region. Charles Williamson, chief promoter of the Genesee country, wrote, in 1799:

By this generous and uncommon exertion, and by some other contributions, the State Commissioner was enabled to complete this road of near 100 miles, opening it 64 feet wide, and paving, with logs and gravel, the moist parts of the low country through which it was carried. Hence the road from Fort Schuyler on the Mohawk River to Genesee from being, in the month of June, 1797, little better than an Indian path, was so far improved that a stage started from Fort Schuyler on the 30th of September, and arrived at the hotel in Geneva, in the afternoon of the third day, with four passengers. This line of road having been established by law, not less than fifty families settled on it in the space of four months after it was opened. (*The Settlement of the Genesee Country*, New York, 1799.)

This Genesee Road into the heart of western New York immediately became one of the most important roads in the state. It was the location of its eastern terminus at Fort Schuyler, with the erection of a bridge over the Mohawk at that point, which was responsible for Utica's rapid rise to importance. The fact that as early as 1800, just three years after it was laid out, it was made a turnpike for its entire length is indicative of its significant place in this period of western emigration.

TURNPIKES—CONSTRUCTION AND FINANCE

A turnpike was a road built by private capital, furnished by stockholders of an incorporated company, who were allowed to reimburse themselves and to secure funds for the proper maintenance of their road by erecting every ten miles a turn gate or turnpike, which, upon the payment of the proper toll, would be turned aside to allow the traveler to pass. The leading turnpikes were usually hard-surfaced, the better ones being built in the standard macadam manner, but there were many

with only an earth surface, graded and properly shaped, with provisions for drainage. They were better maintained, it is to be hoped, than those earth-surfaced roads which were not turnpikes. The attractive feature of a turnpike was that the road was paid for proportionally by those who used it. The modern age, faced with a similar long-distance type of road, has, in the gasoline tax, which is in a sense a toll, gone back to the principle that the roads shall be paid for by the users.

The earliest turnpikes in the state were all tributary to the Hudson. The first to be incorporated in New York, the Albany and Schenectady Turnpike, in 1797, was located just where one would expect to find it—on the first section of New York's greatest route to the West. This short stretch of road was heavily used, for all the inland produce which, previous to the turnpike era, found its way down the Mohawk in Durham boats, was unloaded at Schenectady to be carried across to Albany in wagons. The soil was sandy and the going heavy. There were few inhabitants along the way, and they could not be expected to keep a difficult road in condition for such traffic. Construction on this road was started in 1802, and completed in 1805. Built at a cost of \$10,000 per mile, it was one of the best surfaced roads in the state. The Mohawk Turnpike and Bridge Company, incorporated in 1800, continued the route westward up the Mohawk Valley to Utica; and from Utica the Seneca Turnpike Company, also incorporated in 1800, continued it over the old Genesee Road to Canandaigua. The Rensselaer and Columbia Turnpike, leading from Albany southeast to Lebanon Springs on the road to Springfield, Massachusetts, added to the western route, completed 234 miles of continuous turnpiking across the state by 1807. At that date, the road was being continued westward from Canandaigua by the Ontario and Genesee Company, and it was completed to Lake Erie soon after the War of 1812.

The rival of the Mohawk route in the western trade of Albany was the Cherry Valley, served by the Great Western Turnpike, the second to be incorporated in the state. The first company of the Great Western improved the road from Albany to Cherry Valley. The second company continued the main route from Cherry Valley, through Cooperstown, to Sherburne on the Chenango River; while a third company built a branch, heavily used, from Cherry Valley, through Cazenovia, to Manlius, where it intersected the Seneca Turnpike, thus completing an alternative to the Mohawk route. The fourth and fifth companies continued the main Great Western route from Sherburne, through Homer, to Cayuga Lake, the Cayuga Turnpike Company building a branch that carried a heavy traffic from Homer southwest to Ithaca. At Ithaca, connection was made with the Susquehanna and Bath Turnpike, which continued this southern route onward into the West.

Other early important turnpikes radiating from Albany were the Eastern Turnpike, leading eastward on the road to Williamstown, Massachusetts; the Northern Turnpike, leading north, through Cambridge and Salem, to Granville on the road to Castleton and Middlebury, Vermont; the Albany and Greene Turnpike down the west side of the Hudson to Catskill; and the Farmer's Turnpike down the east side to Hudson. The Farmer's Turnpike was continued down the east side from Hudson to Manhattan Island at Kingsbridge, by the Highland Turnpike Company, the two together forming what was usually known as the old New York and Albany Post Road. The Union Turnpike led from Hudson northeast to Lebanon Springs, and the Columbia Turnpike ran eastward from the same city to the Massachusetts line on the road to Hartford, Connecticut. Poughkeepsie had her Dutchess Turnpike leading eastward on the road to Litchfield, Connecticut. The West-

Chester Turnpike led from Morrisania, opposite Manhattan Island, along Long Island Sound through Rye to Connecticut.

Competition with Albany for the western trade led the cities on the west side of the Hudson to promote turnpikes which, particularly those from Catskill and Newburgh, were to be second in importance only to the Mohawk and Cherry Valley routes. The Susquehanna Turnpike, incorporated as early as 1800, was constructed from Catskill to Wattle's Ferry, soon to be known as Unadilla, on the Susquehanna River. It was continued westward to Ithaca and Bath by the Susquehanna and Bath Turnpike already mentioned. The Newburgh and Cohecton Turnpike, incorporated in 1801, was continued through northeastern Pennsylvania by the Cohecton and Great Bend Turnpike, and into western New York by the Great Bend and Bath Turnpike. The Ithaca and Owego Turnpike branched north from this route at Owego, to meet the Susquehanna and Bath at Ithaca; and the Ithaca and Geneva Turnpike continued the route northwest between the lakes to Geneva, where the Seneca Turnpike was intersected. This whole route was soon to become an important short cut into western New York.

It will be noticed that Bath was the converging point of three important turnpikes. Efforts were made to complete this southern route by a turnpike from Bath to Lake Erie, but differences arose over the course it should take. In 1825, the state appointed Nathaniel Pitcher, Jabez D. Hammond and George Morell a commission to lay out a road westward to the lake. They surveyed a route to Gerry and from there proposed two branches, one to Portland and one to Dunkirk, both booming harbor sites on Lake Erie. A bill to provide for the road's construction by the state was defeated in the legislature largely, it was alleged, through the influence of the "canal section," which for years controlled legislation on internal improvements. The

southern counties felt that they had helped pay for a canal which put their section of the state in eclipse, and that they deserved state aid for their road. Their agitation for a highway, when defeated, was soon turned into agitation for a railroad, and was one reason for the early projection of the Erie line.

Kingston did not succeed so well as her rivals on the Hudson, Catskill and Newburgh, in forcing a turnpike through to the West. The Ulster and Delaware Turnpike, incorporated in 1802, was planned to strike the west branch of the Delaware River at Walton and the Susquehanna at Jericho, but it was never completed. In a region to the westward of Kingston were great landholdings, notably the Hardenburgh patent, upon which tenants were located under life leases. It was found that these people, not owning their lands, were not interested in turnpikes. In the Delaware River region the scattered lumbermen were more interested in freshets to carry their timber to markets than in roads. The Neversink Turnpike, intended to lead from Kingston to Binghamton, was also a failure. The city of Kingston lost thousands of dollars which it had subscribed to these roads.

The turnpikes which have been described were the more important ones, and formed the skeleton of the state's highway system at the time. They were the leading post roads and upon them the chief stagecoach lines were run. They bore the bulk of the state's produce to market, and over them manufactured and imported goods were distributed to retail stores serving the people of the interior. By 1807, 28 companies had built about 900 miles of turnpike roads in New York, or an average of 36 miles each. Later turnpikes tended to be shorter and to be feeders to the through routes, or, subsequently, feeders to canals and railroads. By 1821, 270 turnpikes with an authorized capital of \$11,000,000, and 56 bridge companies with an authorized capital of \$850,000, had been incorporated in New York State.

At this time, about 4,000 miles of road had been turnpiked. Though turnpikes continued to be chartered in diminishing numbers for many years, the movement was then nearly at its peak. The mileage was soon to decline, as many of the older roads, particularly those paralleling canals and railroads, were being abandoned by their companies.

A skilled surveyor was usually employed to lay out a turnpike, and many a later canal and railroad engineer was trained in this school. It was generally built on the line of the previously existing road, but the company possessed the right of eminent domain, if a better road could be secured by a change of course. A few cases are known where a turnpike was constructed entirely through virgin territory. Contracts were let by sections five or ten miles in length, and were generally taken by persons living along the route, who recruited their labor locally. Plow, scraper, cart, shovel and rake constituted the road-making machinery of those days. All the rock was broken by hand. The general turnpike act of New York provided that mileposts should be erected at the sides of the road and guideposts at all intersections. As soon as a five- or ten-mile section was completed, it was inspected by "three discreet freeholders," not interested in any turnpike company, appointed by the governor. They made their report in writing, and, if it proved favorable, the governor issued a license for the turngate. That these "discreet freeholders" were not always competent and disinterested, despite a governor's best intentions, is indicated by Gov. De Witt Clinton's recommendation to the legislature, in 1818, that they at least be placed under oath or the restraint of a penalty.

Toll gates were ordinarily erected every ten miles, though in later days half-gates every five miles were common. Tolls varied, but the maximum was always fixed by the state in the company's charter. The average toll charged in New

York for each ten miles was 12½ cents for every wagon with two horses or oxen, and 3 cents for each additional horse or ox used before the wagon; 25 cents for each coach, coachee, phaeton, curricle, or other pleasure carriage with two horses; 12½ cents for every sulky, chair, chaise, or other one-horse pleasure carriage; 6 cents for every one-horse cart; 8 cents for every two-horse cart; 4 cents for every horse and rider; 6 cents for every sled or sleigh drawn by two horses or oxen, and 3 cents for each additional horse or ox; 20 cents for each score of horses, cattle or mules; and 6 cents for each score of sheep or hogs. The rates were required by law to be posted at each tollgate along the way. Persons living within a mile of a gate were usually exempt from tolls at that gate. Other exemptions, required by law, were persons going to and from public worship, to or from a place of voting on election day, to or from training on muster day, to or from court on jury or witness service, to or from a gristmill or a blacksmith shop, and for a physician or midwife. Certain reductions were made for freight wagons, if their wheels were six inches broad or more. Stagecoach companies, and others using the roads regularly, usually had their tolls commuted, sometimes by one-half. Stagecoach companies settled their accounts quarterly, so that the stages were not stopped in their journey.

Though these tolls were a considerable tax on the wagoner and traveler, they were usually paid cheerfully as a part of the necessary and established system, if the roads were kept in good condition. It was when it was felt that the turnpike companies were shirking their proper maintenance obligations that friction arose. Upon proper complaint in writing being filed, the county superintendents were required by law to examine the places complained of and, if they found the complaint justified, they ordered the nearest gate to be thrown open to the public until repairs were made to their satisfaction. The widely-

prevalent idea that turnpike companies grew wickedly rich from the charges their monopolistic charters gave them the right to exact is wide of the actual truth. Bridge companies in a few places have continued to collect tolls until the present time, and bridges had to be freed by purchase by the town or city in which they were located. But turnpike roads, in New York at least, were surrendered voluntarily, usually because they could not be maintained from the income of the tolls.

Many turnpike companies were in financial difficulties before canals and railroads offered competition. Even the strongest and best located roads received poor returns. The Albany and Schenectady, for instance, reported in 1830 that for a period of twenty-six years it had paid dividends averaging less than $2\frac{3}{4}$ percent a year. The Mohawk Bridge and Turnpike Company reported in 1828 that for the twenty-five years during which it had been in operation the dividends paid had totaled only $32\frac{1}{2}$ percent on the capital invested, the road being hopelessly in debt at the time. The Seneca Road managed to average dividends of 4 percent for about twenty years, and was one of the most successful roads in the state from a financial viewpoint. The Highland Turnpike, on the other hand, though on a well-traveled route, never paid dividends. And these were the chief roads of the state, in the best days of the turnpike era.

Probably after the first decade, few investors in turnpikes were sanguine enough to expect money dividends. Their investment, usually only from two to ten shares, was prompted by the hope of indirect benefits, such as increased land values, better mail facilities, and all-year roads to markets. There never were any turnpike magnates. Cities like Albany or Kingston sometimes made large public subscriptions as a matter of good public policy, but individuals did not subscribe freely. Nor did New York State itself subscribe to turnpike stock as did many other states, notably Pennsylvania. Perhaps a third of the turn-

pike companies chartered in the state never began construction because they could not secure enough capital. Fully another third never sold the full amount of their stock and constructed only a part of their route, or borrowed to complete their roads and afterward spent most of their income, above the amount necessary for maintenance, paying interest on their debt. Often construction work was given to the contractor who would take the largest amount of stock in payment, a practice which was carried over into railroad building.

The longer and stronger turnpikes received a staggering blow from the competition of canals and railroads, because these took away their long-distance traffic. A few struggled along some years in competition with the canals, but none of importance survived if its route paralleled a railroad. Shorter turnpikes, serving local traffic, especially those connecting market cities with rich agricultural districts, survived into the forties and fifties, and frequently in the latter decade were revived as plank roads.

PLANK ROADS AND COVERED BRIDGES

The plank-road movement seems so strange to the modern view that it is difficult to conceive the enthusiasm which, in its brief day, gave it such momentum. It is necessary to recall that at that time New York's timber resources were still abundant, and that plank surfacing was cheaper and promised, at least when new, to be superior to macadam roads in ease of draught, in speed, and in comfort to passengers. Plank roads were especially welcome in portions of the state where limestone was not near at hand for macadam surfacing. Frequently portable sawmills were set up near or along the side of the road to be surfaced, and the logs were secured from the adjoining forest.

The first plank road in the United States was the Syracuse and Central Square, built in 1845-46 between Syracuse and the foot of Oneida Lake, a distance of about fourteen miles. George Geddes, its engineer, had made several trips to Toronto, Canada, to observe the plank roads built there under the inspiration of Lord Sydenham, governor general of Canada in 1839-41, who had brought the idea from Russia, where he had previously been stationed. Within two years after the completion of the Syracuse road, petitions for plank roads reached the legislature in such numbers that it was forced to pass a general plank-road act. Between this and February, 1850, there were incorporated in the state 182 companies, with roads totaling 2,019 miles in length and capital authorized to the amount of \$3,700,000. Geddes received so many inquiries as to the proper mode of construction that in self-defense he was forced to write and publish, in 1850, his *Observations on Plank Roads*, containing detailed descriptions of his methods.

A single-tracked plank road was usually but eight feet wide and was laid only on one side of the artificial roadbed, preferably on that side which gave the planking to the teams going in the direction of the heaviest hauling. The other half of the road would be left with dirt or turnpike surface. The planking would be laid crosswise on sills or sleepers which were four inches square, or heavier, and which ran lengthwise on the road, and were completely embedded in packed earth so as to prevent decay. No nails were used, the weight of the heavy four-inch planks being sufficient to keep them firm. The edge of the planking was purposely left uneven to help heavily-loaded wagons, which had turned out, to get back again on the planked surface, and to prevent the formation of ruts at the side of the road. Planking laid lengthwise was tried, but it was found that the horses' hoofs slipped too easily on it, and also that before long the planks spread and the wheels went down between

them. Diagonal planking also proved impractical, since the wheel, coming only upon one end of the plank at a time, lifted up the free end and in a short time destroyed the road. Planking wider than eight feet was found to be wasted, since traffic, keeping in the center, wore out this part of the planking while the sides were still good.

If the traffic was sufficient to warrant it, a double plank road could be built by laying another eight-foot track on the other half of the road, thus giving to going and coming vehicles lanes with independent planking. The planking was always laid on a slight slope from the center of the roadbed, so that any water, seeping down between the planks, could drain out over the lower edge. Plank roads required an easier grade than ordinary turnpikes, and many roads on hills and slopes were relocated during this period. On these roads, double the loads could be drawn. No matter what the weather, the road to town was good, and the farmer could do his hauling when it was too wet to be in the fields. Every important city, in this period, became the hub of a plank-road system reaching into and making tributary the surrounding agricultural country. By 1857, New York State had chartered 352 plank-road companies, more than any other state, and the movement had extended to all parts of the nation. Had plank roads proved durable, they might have continued to fill their rôle in the transportation system down to the era of the motor vehicle.

But, if the cost of plank roads was small—averaging about \$1,800 to the mile—the depreciation was found to exceed all expectations. Companies which had planned to set aside one-tenth of the cost of their road for depreciation, found the roads in need of new surfacing in five years. The wear of the wheels was not so great as the wear due to the calks on the horses' shoes, despite sand and sawdust sprinkled over the planks. An even greater cause of depreciation was decay. A turnpike in

disrepair might be passable, but a plank road full of holes was dangerous. The road had to be maintained or the planking removed. Most companies soon gave up all thought of replacing their planking, and elected to pay dividends in order to get back a part of their investment. The panic of 1857 effectively restrained any remaining enthusiasm. Some of the roads went back to turnpikes, others to dirt roads. By 1868, only 17 of the 352 chartered plank roads remained in existence, and all operated as turnpikes. Only 10 additional turnpikes, remaining from previous days, were then in existence, making 27 turnpikes in all. Of the longer ones, only the Newburgh and Cohecton and the Great Western were still in business, and in 1871 the Great Western abandoned all of its route except the last ten miles into Albany.

The original purpose of the toll roads no longer existed. The long-distance traffic was now handled by railroads, and the chief users of the roads now belonged to the local communities which supported them. The state had grown in population and wealth so that the taxes were now adequate for maintenance. Public-owned roads could be maintained more economically than turnpikes because the expense of collecting tolls was eliminated. Besides, paying tolls was a petty annoyance which would never be tolerated by the people except under such pressing conditions as first brought turnpikes into existence. Their day was now over.

The turnpike era was also the day of covered bridges. For a long time, on the expanding frontier, the only streams to be bridged were those over which simple bridges could be thrown. For wider and deeper rivers, the earlier generation had to rely upon ferries. Locations for ferries were early settled upon, for a ferry provided a generous supplement to many a frontiersman's income, and gave him an opportunity to increase it still further by hanging out a tavern sign. If the spot were especially

favorable, it was likely to become the nucleus of a village or city. Ferries, however, were time-consuming arrangements at best and, on a heavily-traveled road, they could not handle the traffic. They were expensive, inconvenient and at times dangerous. During high water, it was frequently impossible for them to operate at all. American ingenuity met the challenge of rivers by the invention of the suspension bridge, and by the building of wooden bridges such as had never been built before.

Suspension bridges, invented by an almost forgotten engineering genius, James Finley, of Pennsylvania, who first published his description of the invention in *The Portfolio* for June, 1810, played little part in New York until after the middle of the century, but since the state owes much to Finley it seems appropriate that he should be mentioned. Wooden bridges were the chief reliance of the people, because timber was cheap and conveniently at hand and because American carpenters had become experts in its use. Samuel Sewell, Eugene Cox, Timothy Palmer, Theodore Burr, Enoch Hale and Louis Wernwag were a few of the pioneers in wooden-bridge building in the United States, and of these the greatest was probably Burr, whose combination arch and truss style dominated the covered-bridge era. "Probably no other plan has ever secured more general approbation or better sustained itself than the Burr bridge," wrote Hermann Haupt in one of the first scientific treatises on bridge building to be published in the country (*General Theory of Bridge Construction*, 1853).

Burr built the first notable wooden bridge in New York over the Hudson, at Waterford, in 1804. Constructed of yellow pine, and formed of four spans resting on wooden piers, it was 797 feet long. It carried two roadways each 11 feet wide. The design was one of Burr's best, and the bridge continued in use until 1909. He built a similar bridge across the Hudson at Fort Miller soon afterward, and in 1808 constructed a wooden

bridge across the Mohawk at Schenectady. This last, consisting also of four piers, was of radically different design. In 1828, it began to sag and piers were built under the center of each span. It was probably one of the queerest looking structures in the state, but, thus reënforced, it did duty until 1873. Burr also built a bridge at Esperance, on the Cherry Valley Turnpike, in 1811, which remained in service until 1930, when it was dismantled by the state highway department. A later builder of wooden bridges, not known for any inventions connected with them, but rather for the great number which he built throughout New England and eastern New York, was Nicholas Montgomery Powers, of Vermont, many of whose structures have lasted until within recent years, when they were removed, not because they were unsound, but because they were too narrow for modern demands. Happily, however, his bridge at North Blenheim, New York, built in 1855, and famous as one of the longest wooden spans ever erected, was saved from demolition in 1931 through the force of public sentiment, and will remain as an example of the expert workmanship which was expressed in these structures. It is said that when the last trestle was removed from under the bridge at its completion, Powers sat out at its center and expressed his feelings in the words: "If this bridge goes down, I never want to see the sun rise again." During the winter of 1930-31, fourteen-ton trucks of ice passed continually over it, and the long truss, supplemented by a concealed arch of solid oak, remained as true and straight as on the day when it was finished.

Wooden bridges were not covered at the beginning, but to preserve them from the weather it was soon found expedient to put a roof overhead and sheathing on the sides. If the bridge were of the latticework type, a few feet on the sides, usually near the top and under the wide eaves, were left open for light and ventilation. In other bridges square windows were cut at

intervals, while others had no light at all. Sometimes the gables and entrances would be decorated with pillars, arches, or fanciful carvings, but more often utilitarian builders did not take time for such embellishments. At night a lantern or oil lamp, hanging at the entrance of frequently-used bridges, gave out a ghostly light. Otherwise the dark tunnels were, to the timid, rather fearsome places after dark. The old-time covered bridge was a notable achievement. Built usually of white pine, a timber which possessed both lightness and stiffness, its intricate anatomy was joined together in earlier days by wooden pins and keys and wedges.

USES OF THE OLD ROADS

Much more interesting than the old roads themselves were the varied activities associated with them. Something of their importance as freight carriers has been indicated. The wealth of the West comprised pork, bacon, lard, grain, flour, potash, wool, maple sugar, and other products of an agrarian society. Since it was important, however, to transport such products in their lightest and most compact form, the first steps in manufacturing were often taken at home or in such local establishments as flour mills, tanneries, distilleries and fulling mills. Thus as value increased and weight lessened, so that distance could be cheated of its toll. Perhaps the farmer did his hauling himself in late autumn, or in winter just before the spring thaw. Perhaps the local miller or the distillery owner bought of the farmer and kept a team constantly on the road to convey the product to market. The country storekeeper, too, was likely to keep a team busy taking to the market city the produce he had received from the farmer, and bringing back his imported goods and wares.

Wagons, covered with canvas and drawn by from four to

eight horses, were seen in great numbers on the Mohawk, Great Western, Newburgh, and Catskill pikes. The leading team usually had bells fastened to their hames to give warning on the curves and hills. Teamsters rode the near wheel horse, or more usually, in New York, walked alongside the wagons, whip in hand, and guiding their leaders more by the sharp reports of the long whiplash than by the single line attached to the near lead horse. Their constant travel wore a good footpath along each side of the road, a hundred miles from Albany. Such wagons never traveled faster than a walk. Twenty miles was a good day's distance. Ten dollars a ton for one hundred miles was the average cost of such transport. Some wagoners carried freight through from Albany to Buffalo. The rate at first was as high as \$5.00 per hundred, but competition later lowered it to \$1.25.

Not much was needed of a wagoner's tavern, or wagon stand as it was known, except sheds and stabling, a large wagon yard, a large barroom floor, and food. Alonzo Crosby, long a superintendent on the eastern part of the Great Western Turnpike, counted fifty or more taverns in the fifty-two miles between Albany and Cherry Valley (J. R. Simms, *The Frontiersmen of New York*, I, 356-63), and the taverns on the Mohawk route averaged one each mile as far as the Palatine Church, fifty-one miles. On one five-mile stretch below Little Falls on the Mohawk pike, were thirteen dwellings of which twelve were taverns. Some tavern keepers themselves owned teams which were kept constantly on the road. From these facts, one begins to understand what a large population these highways supported in their livelier days.

The son of a tavern keeper on the old Newburgh pike wrote, in 1873:

The present generation can little realize the number of emigrants and the amount of heavy transportation upon this road before canals and railroads came to the relief of oxen and horses, and entirely diverted

travel from many of its accustomed channels. From Newburgh and other eastern points to the Lake country in New York and elsewhere westward, there was such a throng of travelers, that, even among that comparatively sparse population, several public houses were required where but one is now kept. [His earliest recollections] were those of travellers from year to year filling the house from garret to bar-room, and of a cellar stored with liquors and eatables in their season, while the long sheds were crowded with horses and vehicles. Customers were moving at all hours, coming in until midnight, while others, long before daylight . . . were starting away. On a rainy day . . . crowds of men would gather to pitch quoits, and play various games of skill and chance.

Scarcely less important on the old highways than wagons of freight were the droves of cattle, hogs and even turkeys, which were taken hundreds of miles to market. Usually the professional drovers went into a community and, purchasing a few animals from this farmer and a few from that, assembled a proper-sized herd at some central tavern stand and sent it off to market in charge of a lieutenant and three or four boys, the drover, meanwhile, passing on to the next community to collect the next herd. Cattle for New York City, in the earlier years of the century, came mostly from an area one hundred miles on each side of the Hudson; but later they came from farther northwest, and especially from the upper Susquehanna region in south-central New York. Philadelphia probably received even more stock from this section of New York than did New York City. Much stock was driven from western New York to farmers in eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey, to be fattened before going to the city markets.

One hundred and twenty droves, averaging 125 head each, were counted in a single season passing a tavern on the old Chautauqua Road in western New York. The number was surely much greater on roads farther to the eastward. Drovers,

when possible, took the less-used roads, in preference to the hard-surfaced turnpikes, which ruined the feet of their stock. Less traffic also made the driving easier. Wagon taverns were sometimes used by the drovers, but, on the whole, wagoners and drovers did not mix well, and a tavern keeper soon found it to his interest to specialize. A drovers' tavern needed several large fields, into which the separate herds could be turned for the night. Westchester County and central Manhattan were dotted with drovers' taverns, where herds were held until the slaughter-houses were ready for them. Most of these taverns were owned by the buyers themselves. A shrewd, hard business, that of cattle-buyer, but some men followed it with zest all their lives. Others turned to account in higher fields the training it gave them. Daniel Drew is said to have fed his cattle salt, so that they would drink heavily before going on the scales, and he carried the term "watered stock" with him when he entered the financial world.

Then, there were the emigrants. For the first three decades of the century, New Yorkers were familiar with these westward wanderers, whose wagons contained their beds, food and dearest possessions. At first, in western New York at least, the men came alone on horseback, with well-filled saddlebags and portmanteaus, prospecting for land. Andrew Fink, tavern keeper near Little Falls, told the historian, Simms, that, in 1805-6, he often had thirty or forty such horseback travelers to entertain in a single night. Later, they brought their families and goods. Frequently several families traveled together in three or four wagons. At night, they stopped at the lower-class wagon or drovers' taverns, or perhaps camped beside a stream in the woods, to save expense. Emigrants bound for Olean, where they embarked on the Allegheny-Ohio waterway, usually traveled across the northern roads before the snow was gone, waiting at Olean for the break up of the river and the rise of the waters.

Some built their own flatboats or rafts while waiting, meanwhile staying in hastily-constructed board shanties, or in their own tents and wagons. Those in better circumstances might stay at Hicks' tavern, a few miles back on the road, which was known to have housed 200 persons at a time. It has been estimated that 3,000 emigrants embarked at Olean in 1818, reaching their Ohio lands in time to plant their spring crops (*History of Cattaraugus County*, Philadelphia, 1872, p. 35).

THE STAGECOACH

Of all the associations of the old road, none is more colorful than the stagecoach, and none is a more adequate symbol of the age. It must be thought of as a living, creative agent, shuttling back and forth across the state, carrying news, mails, packages and persons into nearly every community, and binding all communities together into a patterned civilization partly of its own determining.

The first stage to run in New York State was undoubtedly that established in 1757 by Joseph Richards to cross Staten Island from Perth Amboy ferry to the several ferries to New York City, thus completing a line of stages from Philadelphia to New York. Previous to the completion of a causeway across the Hackensack marshes to Newark in 1764, several other colonial stage lines to Philadelphia crossed Staten Island. There were also several colonial stage lines on Long Island, and one along the Westchester shore of Long Island Sound to Rye. These were in existence only a few years, and it may be said that staging in New York did not begin until after the Revolution.

The first stage line of importance in the state was that set up in June, 1785, by Isaac Van Wyck, John Kinney and Talmadge Hall, tavern keepers respectively of Fishkill, Kinderhook and New York City, to ply along the east side of the Hudson

between New York and Albany. They were encouraged by a grant from the state legislature of monopoly rights on the road for ten years. Twelve similar acts were passed by the legislature, between 1785 and 1817, to encourage pioneer stagecoach ventures on other important routes of travel. The proprietors on the east side of the Hudson ran their stages three times a week in summer and twice a week in winter for many years, going through in two days in the more favorable season. A through line between Albany and New York west of the Hudson was not established until 1803, when the legislature also granted the proprietors monopoly rights. Service on this route was rather slow and uncertain until 1814, when a complete reorganization put it on a more dependable tri-weekly basis. Service west of the Hudson, however, always remained below that of the east side in quality. The invention of the steamboat was a heavy blow to these lines and after 1810 they were important carriers only in the winter, when the river was frozen. In the summer, they dozed along in rather sleepy fashion, serving only local travel and trade.

Meanwhile, the two cities of Albany and Troy, at the head of navigation on the Hudson, became a hub for stage lines west, north and east. Ananias Platt, a Lansingburgh tavern keeper, in 1789 placed on the road a stage to run from Lansingburgh to Albany, by way of Troy. Moses Beal, tavern keeper at Schenectady, started the first line west of Albany when, in 1793, he ran a weekly stage through Schenectady and up the Mohawk Valley to Canajoharie. Jason Parker, a former post rider on the route, in 1794, extended stage service from Canajoharie to Whitestown. In 1796, these three united their forces, received a contract for carrying the mails on the route, and as Beal, Platt and Parker, proprietors of the "Western Mail Stages," held the western road against all opposition. A branch line was established from Canajoharie to Cooperstown in 1794, and in the summer

of 1796 the first stage was run to the new watering-place, Ballston Springs.

In the autumn of 1797, the first stage service was started over the newly-opened Genesee Road from Utica to Geneva "in the western country," by John House and Thomas Powell, inn-keepers at Utica and Geneva. Powell, formerly landlord of the famous Thatched Cottage in London, had been secured by Charles Williamson to preside over the recently-erected Geneva Hotel, than which, according to the traveler, John Maude, "perhaps there is not a better house in the United States for liquors, attention, cooking and stabling, nor for provisions." When, in 1802, House removed from Utica, Jason Parker fell heir to his interest in the stage line and connected it with the line from Albany. Utica in time became a staging center second only to Albany in importance, with lines radiating to Rome, Oswego, Sackett's Harbor, Montreal via Ogdensburg, Cooperstown, Binghamton, Owego and Ithaca, besides the lines between Albany and Buffalo which passed through it. Jason Parker and Company, controlling all the routes leading to and from the city, built up one of the largest staging establishments in the country. In 1807, John Metcalf received a legislative monopoly from Canandaigua to Buffalo, but stage service was not finally completed across the state until 1811, when Joseph Langdon and Company were responsible for the western end of the line.

North and east from Albany, there was also a call for stage lines to take care of increasing travel. In 1796 a stage connection with Lake Champlain was established. In the same year, a line was running to Salem in Washington County and by 1800, after several failures, it was extended to Bennington, Vermont. In 1793 Albany was connected with Boston by stage, when Patch and Draper, New England proprietors, succeeded in establishing a line across the Berkshires. This first crossing of a mountain range in America by a regular stage line was then

considered a notable advance. Travel between New England and New York State increased rapidly, until, by 1827, there were two daily and nine tri-weekly stage lines running between Boston and Albany, by several routes. By this time, stages were running from Albany to Montreal on both sides of Lake Champlain, going through in three days. In summer, additional lines carried passengers to Whitehall, at the southern end of Lake Champlain, where they could change to steamers. Two lines southeast from Albany threaded the mountains by different routes to Hartford, Connecticut; and a third line went by Litchfield to New Haven. A semi-weekly stage ran southwest from Albany to Unadilla and Oxford, where connection was made for the growing towns of the Susquehanna region. A mail line passed daily via Cherry Valley to Cooperstown, and lines passed westward over the Cherry Valley and Mohawk routes. By 1830, five daily lines of stages were running between Albany and Buffalo. The *National Advertiser*, in 1827, commented:

Probably there is no point in the United States where so many public stages meet and find employment as at Albany. They issue thence upon every point in the compass and it has become a business in which a large amount of capital is invested, and much enterprise and competition enlisted. (Boston, Oct. 12, 1827).

Staging from Catskill westward over the Susquehanna Turnpike began in 1805, under the encouragement of a monopoly of the road granted by the legislature. The stage running first only to Unadilla, was next extended to Bainbridge, and later to Ithaca. Another important route from Catskill was the short cut over the Schoharie Turnpike, and through Schoharie to Canajoharie, where connection was made with western lines on the Mohawk Turnpike. No railroad goes over this cross-country route today. Kingston, handicapped by failure with her western turnpikes, had no stagecoach route to the west. Late in the stage-

coach era, a line was established northwest from Kingston, to intersect the Susquehanna Turnpike from Catskill at Delhi. More important than the Catskill line to the west was that from Newburgh over the turnpike system, already described, leading across northeastern Pennsylvania to Binghamton and Owego, and from the latter village northwest through Ithaca to Geneva. Oliver Phelps headed a reorganized stage company which, in 1818, improved staging on this line and, by putting steamers on Cayuga Lake for night travel, made the route a restful and expeditious one from New York City to Buffalo. Service became daily in 1822.

An even more direct route from New York City into western New York, though not established until 1823, was that which crossed northern New Jersey by way of Newark, and northeastern Pennsylvania by the Milford and Owego Turnpike to Owego, New York, where it intersected the Newburgh line and proceeded over the same route to Ithaca and Geneva. Thus this line, the Newburgh line, and the Catskill line, all came together at Ithaca, where Jesse Grant and Chauncey L. Grant, father and son, the proprietors of Grant's Coffee House, had an interest in the Ithaca end of all three lines, as well as in lines west and northwest to Elmira, Bath, Auburn and Geneva. There is evidence that, toward the latter part of the stagecoach era, the proprietors on all three of these routes were combined together through working agreements, if not actually in one great stock company. Individual proprietors put in as many coaches and horses as were needed to operate the number of miles for which each was responsible, and drew out of the common treasury receipts in proportion to their mileage. Once every three months, meetings of the proprietors were held at some point along the line, accounts were balanced, settlements made, and further policies decided. A similar association was formed by the companies operating over the busy roads between Albany,

Buffalo and Niagara. Thorpe and Sprague controlled the Albany end of these lines. Jason Parker and Company carried on through Utica and westward, until D. and J. M. Sherwood, with headquarters at Canandaigua, took over the line. It was completed to Buffalo by C. H. Coe and Company and B. D. Coe and Company, the big organizations at the western end of the state. For nearly twenty years, they controlled the route, forcing competitor after competitor off the road.

The most exciting struggle occurred in 1828, when as a result of widespread agitation throughout the country, but particularly in New York, against Sunday mails, an attempt was made to place a rival line on the road between Albany and Buffalo "conducted in such a manner, that it shall not encourage the violation of the laws of God and of our country, by profaning the Sabbath." The drivers were "to be men who do not swear nor drink ardent spirits, and who prefer the house of Worship, on the Sabbath, to the noisy bar-room," while the proprietors hoped "that some of our taverns will be *without bars*." The old proprietors were bound by their contract with the Post Office Department to transport the mails on this important route seven days in the week. They charged that the proprietors of the new line were merely taking advantage of the Sunday-mail agitation to entrench themselves in the stagecoach business.

To avoid the formidable and well known evils which uniformly attend contending stage lines [they offered in the *Utica Intelligencer* of April 8, 1828, to sell their] entire stock of Horses, Harness, Coaches, Carriages, Wagons, Sleighs, and other property immediately connected with the running of stages which are now employed by us on the two great roads from Albany and Troy to Buffalo and Niagara Falls, at a fair and reasonable price, to be estimated by 3 competent persons to be agreed upon by the venders and vendees, and to give a liberal credit to purchasers on approved security.

This offer was not accepted by the challenging line and, after continuing the opposition for a little more than a year, they gave up the struggle. This brief account does not do justice to the interest which the contest aroused throughout the state, as evidenced by editorial paragraphs in practically all the newspapers and in many religious journals.

Going to Niagara Falls, one might prefer to leave the most traveled route to the west, through Canandaigua and Batavia to Buffalo, and take the more northern route through Rochester and along the famous Ridge Road to Lewiston, from which the Falls could be approached from below. There was probably no better road in the state than that on the gravel ridge, at some earlier epoch the southern shore line of Lake Ontario, entirely level, always dry, fifteen to twenty feet above the surrounding country, and extending almost the entire distance between Rochester and Lewiston. Travelers frequently went to the Falls by one route and returned by the other.

Travel west of Buffalo was usually by water, and it was many years before the road along the shore of Lake Erie to the Pennsylvania boundary was fit for stages or the hauling of produce and merchandise. The streams entering the lake were not bridged; from Cattaraugus Creek westward, the road was a continuous mudhole; great forests and swamps, together with sparse settlement, made the rude trail lonely and perilous. Mail was transported over this route by a postrider, from 1806 on, but it was 1820 before improvements and settlement enabled the carrier, Col. Nathan Bird, a Revolutionary soldier, to place a two-horse-wagon line in operation. In 1823, he began a service with four-horse post coaches between Buffalo and Erie, Pennsylvania. Bird was one of the foremost pioneer entrepreneurs of this western district, and for many years he kept a "free tavern" for emigrants at his house in Westfield. This route along the lake subsequently came under the control of the



THE EAGLE TAVERN IN BUFFALO

great Ohio Stage Company. Like the routes parallel to the Hudson, it saw its period of greatest activity in winter, when travel on the lake was closed.

Staging on the great routes which have been named was a highly organized business, employing many people, proprietors, division superintendents, agents in each town, drivers, hostlers, porters and runners. Offices, equipped with maps and time-tables, were usually found in hotels where stage lines had their headquarters. Beside the regular coaches, a stage company, if travel proved heavy, had to be ready to send additional stages, and several of these "extras" would sometimes follow the regular coach, in a manner resembling the several sections of the present Twentieth Century Limited. By paying a certain price, usually the fare of seven passengers, an affluent traveler might command for himself and his party an "exclusive extra," into which none but his invited guests might enter. Such a chartered coach was usually at his orders in regard to hours of starting and halting, provided the end of the journey were reached within an agreed time.

Besides the great through routes, there were many local routes often served by only one coach and team, probably owned by the driver himself. Such lines penetrated to all the hamlets of the state, carrying the mails and a passenger or two each day, and handling much of the business of the communities through which they passed. Less affected by the coming of the railroads, employing dilapidated hacks, unworthy of their progenitors, they continued to carry the mails to rural inland post offices until the advent of the rural free-delivery system.

THE ROMANCE OF THE OLD ROAD WANES

It was but natural that Albany and Troy, where staging activities in the state were particularly centered, should also be

headquarters for the manufacture of stagecoaches. In Albany the factory of the Goolds, established in 1813 by James Goold, continued to make stagecoaches for forty years. This firm built the stagecoach bodies, which, placed upon iron wheels, were used as the cars of the first Mohawk and Hudson train, the painting of which, by E. L. Henry, is so familiar to all New Yorkers. In Troy, Charles Veazie began the business about 1815, retiring in 1836. He found a competitor in Orsamus Eaton, who began about 1823, formed a partnership with Uri Gilbert in 1830 and, as Eaton and Gilbert, continued in the business until the factory burned in 1852. Many improvements in stagecoaches were made by the Troy manufacturers, and during the thirties and forties their stages were sent to all part of the Union. "Eaton and Veazie have rendered Trojan carriages almost as noted as the wooden horse of old Troy," comments the *Troy Budget*, as quoted in the *American Traveller*, on August 12, 1831. By 1850, not less than 5,000 of the stagecoaches of Eaton and Gilbert were in use in the United States, Canada, Mexico and South America.

Little has been said of the stagecoach driver, a splendid American type, who was a hero to his own generation.

They are men [wrote Harriet Martineau] who command admiration equally by their perfection in their art, their fertility of resource, and their patience with their passengers. The worse the roads were, the more I was amused by the devices by which we got on, through difficulties which appeared insurmountable, and the more I was edified at the gentleness with which our drivers treated female fears and fretfulness.

Independence was an outstanding trait of the American stage-driver. The English travelers in America quickly learned that he was the "captain of his ship." As he accepted no tips, so he accepted no special instructions from his passengers. If he

favored any passengers, he did so because they had won his regard, and few were better offhand judges of character than the experienced stagedriver. Foreign travelers who took him as an equal and paid him the compliment of asking questions about the countryside, usually parted with a respect for his manners and intelligence. He knew every distant spire, could give offhand the histories of all the principal personages in the different towns, and could tell the name of every tow-haired urchin that bowed and scraped with his best manners as the stage passed by. But the English gentleman of the old school, used to being "Yes Sir'd" and "Certainly Sir'd" by obsequious lackeys at home, was likely to find the American driver cool. If John Bull grew too haughty and peremptory in tone, the driver was as likely as not to remind him that the English had already been "licked" twice.

In America there was no guard, as in England, to pay particular attention to the passengers and their baggage, and doubtless the foreign travelers missed this added attention. The high price of labor did not admit of this extra official. Americans helped themselves, and foreigners traveling in this country soon learned to do the same. It was the American way. The driver had the responsibility of his team, which he was forbidden to leave unattended while it was attached to the coach. Contrary to the English custom, he himself cared for his horses at the beginning and at the end of each relay. His was the skill which directed them over the difficult roads, and there was scarcely a traveler from abroad who did not pay tribute to his genius with the reins. His cargo was human life, where a slip meant possibly broken limbs and death. Even when all went well, it required a man of tact and diplomacy to deal with the whims and demands of the passengers. In his hands were the mails—lifeblood of a nation—which he had sworn to protect with his life, not only against robberies, but against loss or damage by

a dozen other dangers of the road. There was the passenger's baggage, perhaps not so valuable—Americans, at least, had learned in stagecoach days to travel light—but the safety of which must be guarded to preserve good will for the company. There was express matter, forwarded by the stage company, the safe arrival of which was guaranteed, or reimbursement for the loss. There were bank notes and other forms of money, which the driver usually carried on his own person, the returns from which were sometimes his own prerogative, according to his arrangement with his employers. There was the way mail to deliver along the route, occasional newspapers to throw at the gate of a farmhouse, messages to deliver, business directions to pass on. All of this in the everyday round of duties. But the real test came when the elements were contrary, when rain, darkness, or snow created their hazards, when freshets and washouts made roads and bridges treacherous, when breakdowns taxed his ingenuity, when teams became frightened and unmanageable. Truly, he was a man of action and a man of the world, and it is small wonder that all men fraternized with him, that mothers indulged him, and that the hearts of maids beat faster as he greeted them.

The moods and sensations which accompanied stagecoach travel varied with the weather and the seasons. Of winter travel in particular, New York knew more than most states. On lesser roads, service might be reduced during the inclement season from daily to thrice a week, or from that to semiweekly, but the freezing of certain great water routes in New York, such as the Lake Erie harbors, the Erie Canal, Lake Champlain, and the upper part of the Hudson, threw an immense additional business to the stages. Winter travel, with runners instead of wheels, had thrills of its own when the marshes were frozen, when corduroy roads were buried deep, and when sleighs sped swiftly behind powerful horses to the rhythmic swing of tune-

ful sleigh bells. All speed records were made in winter, when the roads were firm. The Albany newspapers inform us that in February, 1828, the Old Line accomplished the 96 miles between Utica and Albany in nine hours and ten minutes, "supposed to be the greatest speed ever known in this region." The 16 miles between Albany and Schenectady were covered in sixty-seven minutes. When the upper reaches of the Hudson were frozen solid enough, the stagecoaches abandoned the hilly and circuitous land route for the smooth surface of the river. Tavern shanties and relay stables were erected on the ice. The same was done on Lake Champlain. Francis Hall, traveler of 1817, tells how, after plodding from Troy to Whitehall at three and one-half miles an hour, he and his fellow travelers rode up Lake Champlain at nine miles an hour while "the keen blasts of the north sweeping over its expanse, pierced us with needles of ice; the thermometer was 22° below zero; buffalo hides, bear skins, caps, shawls, and handkerchiefs were vainly employed against a degree of cold so much beyond our habits." For long stretches the frozen bed of the Erie Canal was also used for a stage road in winter, and in the west the stages left the land for the frozen edges of Lake Erie.

Though the Erie Canal effectively supplanted the turnpike as a carrier of freight, it did not, as has often been supposed, interfere seriously with the stagecoach business. That it was closed from four to five months each year by ice (see the table of averages in J. Munsell's *Annals of Albany*, I, 223) was one reason. That the stage lines retained the year-round advantage of a contract for carrying the mail was another. A third reason was that the canal packets were not so comfortable and delightful as romantic writers have sometimes pictured them. "I would never advise ladies to travel by canal, unless the boats are quite new and clean; or at least far better kept than any that I saw or heard of on this canal," wrote Harriet Martineau (*Retrospect*

of *Western Travel*, London, 1838, I, 117). Foreign travelers frequently took a packet boat for part of their journey for the novelty's sake, but few, except emigrants, went the entire distance, for such travel was found to be both slow and monotonous. The scenery was not as varied; there were few views as extensive as when a stage topped a hill. In the summer, when the canal was able to offer competition to the stagecoaches, there was travel enough for both. After a few years, the capacity of the canal was more and more absorbed by heavy freight shipments.

De Witt Clinton, with his usual perspicacity, accurately forecast, in 1820, the rôle which canals were to play in relation to turnpikes. Of the packet boats recently put into service, he remarked:

Although I am persuaded that the owners of these vehicles of conveyance will be amply remunerated for their public spirit, yet I am equal convinced that the conveyance of passengers will be principally by land, and of commodities by water, after the prevailing curiosity to visit the canal is gratified. In the meantime there will be competition between the carriers by land and water, for custom; and a like competition between the proprietors of stages and boats for passengers, which will add greatly, by decreasing the price of transportation, to the general benefit of the country – and by good and easy accommodation to the convenience of travellers. . . . When the great six horse, heavy teams are banished from use, the roads will be improved. The tipping houses, which derive their principal support from such teamsters, will fall into disuse. The good inns on the road will meet with greater encouragement, because travelling will increase with population and business.

Though canals did not encroach seriously on the business of stagecoaching, railroads supplanted it completely. Yet it was a long time between the coming of the first railroads and the final disappearance of the stagecoach. Stages were used when a

railroad was being built, to continue the route from the temporary terminus to the ultimate destination. The partial completion of a railroad seemed to encourage travel, so that twice as many stages were needed on the uncompleted portion. After the railroad was built, stages found employment as feeders until the branches were built. However, between 1840 and 1850, stage lines were disappearing rapidly from the main travel routes of the state. They betook themselves to the hilly rural districts and to the mountains, where old forms of transportation always linger, and where they maintained an existence until replaced by the motor omnibus. With the coming of the railroads, the through highways, which had supported so much life and activity, relapsed into sleepy roads of local importance. Busy towns at important crossroads became isolated country hamlets, shown only on the most detailed maps. Taverns were converted into ordinary farmhouses, or, if in town, became boarding houses for village bachelors and itinerant laborers, dropping lower each year in appearance and reputation. Whole sections of the country, once busy and prosperous, found themselves thrust to one side. The revolutions worked by changes in transportation are profound. If the railroads destroyed the life of the old highways of New York, the motor age is giving it a new birth.

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THE CANAL SYSTEM AND
ITS INFLUENCES

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THE CANAL SYSTEM AND ITS INFLUENCES

PRELIMINARY CONDITIONS

IN THE last years of the eighteenth century and the early decades of the nineteenth, intellectual activity, awakened by the spread of republican ideas, was turned into practical, utilitarian and commercial channels in a new country but just launched upon a course of independent action. The need of America was expansion and, subsidiary to that, communication—some means by which waiting thousands could be poured into the interior, there to develop the vast inert resources, and a line of ready intercourse which should supply the frontier from the coast and the coast from the frontier, each with its respective wants—a link to bind the straggling interior settlements already forming with the large settlements of the East and to weld the two into one before opportunity had been given them to grow apart. It is precisely in this light that the Erie Canal appears to be a manifestation of the spirit of the times.

As a work which compares favorably with any wonder of the ancient world in grandeur and in utility, the New York waterway, gigantic for its time, stands undeniably as the most enduring single monument of that period. As the progenitor of new and wonderful modes of communication, and more than all else, as an economic force, stimulating and guiding the nation in its development, the canal wielded a tremendous influence. At a time when one has ceased even to wonder at stupendous engineering feats, it is hard to appreciate the material difficulties and the temper of mind which attended the beginning of America's great pioneer waterway. In view of the primitive conditions and the lack of resources of the time, it is not strange that the people of a struggling Republic stood aghast at so vast

an enterprise, and that the project dragged along for years before sufficient public sentiment could be aroused to demand its fulfillment.

Influenced by the example of Europe, stimulated by an imperative need and blessed with numberless opportunities, the American colonists began the projection of canals only a few years after the commencement of active canal building in England, and within a half century were in the midst of constructing extensive waterway systems which were the equals of the best in the world. Several schemes for inland navigation were agitated during the colonial period, but the restrictions imposed by England were almost prohibitive of any great enterprise. The Revolution interrupted all thought of canals, but soon after its close they came to the front again.

General Washington took the lead in projecting inland navigation, both before and immediately after the war. His chief canal activity related to routes south of New York, but his interest was so broad as to take in all possible improvements in the country. Before peace was declared, on a journey through northern and central New York, he gained a personal knowledge of waterway possibilities. In a letter to the Marquis de Chastellux in 1783, describing "the immense diffusion and importance of the inland navigation of the country," he exclaimed, "Would to God we may have wisdom enough to improve them."

To understand why New York State undertook the building of an extensive waterway system, which has been enlarged several times and even today is in use, one must know something of colonial conditions and activities, and also of the topography of the state. As settlements were made by the Dutch, the English and the French, the natural streams between these colonies became the arteries of communication in peace and the warpaths of the colonists and their Indian allies in times of hostility.

Consequently the topographical features of these lands were well known while the country was still a vast wilderness, and the bettering of transportation at portage, fall or rapids was the first step in waterway improvements.

The most favorable conditions in the United States for opening communications between the ocean and the great inland seas were supplied by nature in New York State. The Hudson is the only river in the country that has a navigable channel through the coast range of mountains. The westerly Allegheny range terminates south of the Mohawk Valley, leaving a long expanse of comparatively level surface in the central and western portions of the state, traversed by numerous streams. The head of natural navigation in the Hudson is at Troy, nearly 150 miles inland. Westward from this point, there stretches directly across the center of the state, for about 200 miles, a chain of natural waterways—four rivers, a creek and a lake. Along the northern border of the western half of the state, for about 150 miles, lies the most easterly of the Great Lakes. The Oswego River, flowing north, connects these two parallel natural waterway routes—Lake Ontario on the border, and the chain of rivers a few miles inland to the south. At the western end of the state lies the second most easterly of the Great Lakes. Northward from the headwaters of the Hudson there stretch a creek, a lake of a hundred miles length, and a river, which, with the Hudson, afford a natural waterway that runs in an almost straight and nearly due-north line between New York City and Montreal. Such are the chief natural watercourses of the state. They gave to New York the only feasible route in the country for a canal from the ocean to the great inland lakes. The pioneers, red and white, recognized their advantages and used them for their waterways.

Since transportation is of supreme importance to every people, and the question of improving it is of more fundamental

concern to most nations than any other problem which confronts them, the waterways of the Empire State hold a unique position. The New York canals made possible the speedy development of both the state itself and several states to the west, and influenced largely the prosperity of the entire nation. For many years, the financial affairs of the canals dictated the financial policy of the state. The canals have occasioned the rise and fall of statesmen, and often have dominated the policies of political parties. Their story has been so inextricably interwoven with that of the state as to form one of the most important chapters in its history.

As to the extent of canal construction, it may be said that 18 main canals have been built. Of these 3 have been enlarged three times and one four times. If we count navigable feeders, branches and an extension as separate canals, the whole number becomes 28. In addition, 67 private canal companies have been incorporated by the legislature.

FIRST ATTEMPTS AT A WATERWAY

Until 1792, the unimproved streams in New York had to suffice for nearly all of the requirements of travel and transport. The natural watercourses were the first public highways, and because roads, when they came, were so poor and the carrying of goods over them so costly, the people continued to use the streams for transportation and often for travel. There had grown up a considerable amount of traffic by 1792, and the need of betterments had been felt for many years. Probably the war of 1754-63, and particularly the two expeditions under Colonel Bradstreet and General Prideaux, which used the Mohawk-Oneida Lake route for transporting troops and stores, demonstrated more than any other experience the necessity for improved navigation.

The first official action looking toward the improvement of inland navigation was a message sent by Governor Moore to the General Assembly on December 16, 1768. Instead of considering this message, however, the House began immediately the drafting of resolutions protesting against the abridgment of the colony's rights, and within a few days the governor dissolved the Assembly. There the matter of improved navigation rested till after the Revolution.

The next official mention is found in the Assembly Journal of November 3, 1784, being a petition from Christopher Colles, an Irish engineer who had come to America in 1765 and who had lectured in New York on canals as early as 1773. He proposed a plan of inland navigation on the Mohawk, which was endorsed by the New York Chamber of Commerce. The committee to which this petition was referred reported that, although the proposal was laudable, it was deemed inexpedient that the work should be undertaken at public expense. Mr. Colles did not let the matter rest with his first failure. The Assembly records of the next two years contain references to his further attempts, but nothing of lasting importance came of them. Probably these attempts of Colles came too soon after the Revolution to gain the support so important a subject deserved, and it may be, too, that they failed because they were not backed by men of influence. When the next attempt was made, it was initiated by the governor, and later the man to direct the work of construction was one of the most prominent in the state. Meantime other states also were adopting measures to improve their inland navigation.

Governor George Clinton, in a speech on January 5, 1791, commended to the consideration of the legislature the improvement of inland navigation. The response was the ordering of a survey, which was made in the summer of 1791 during the legislative recess. One of the two men who made this survey

was Benjamin Wright, a man who later became the best known of the early engineers and who earned the title, "Father of American Engineering."

As a result of this survey and of an investigation carried on privately by Elkanah Watson, one of the most ardent advocates of waterway improvements of his time, the legislature of 1792 passed an act incorporating the Western and the Northern Inland Lock Navigation Companies. The act declared the purpose of the Western Company to be that "of opening a lock navigation from the now navigable part of Hudson's River to be extended to Lake Ontario, and to the Seneca Lake," and the Northern Company "for the like purpose, from the now navigable part of Hudson's River to Lake Champlain." The canals were to be capable of passing boats 40 feet long by 20 feet wide, drawing two feet of water. The act provided for taking subscriptions for shares and also for aid by the state to the extent of \$12,500 to each company after it had expended \$25,000. It limited the toll rate to \$25 a ton from the Hudson to Seneca Lake or Lake Ontario, and to \$20 from the Hudson to Lake Champlain. The act was amended later, allowing the companies to fix the lock dimensions, to be not less, however, than 10 feet wide by 70 feet long. During the legislative activities that preceded the passage of this act, Gen. Philip Schuyler, then a prominent member of the state Senate, became the chief advocate of the measure. Later, he was the president of the companies that undertook the work and, during the early stages, he served also as supervising engineer.

The companies formed by this act had no easy task. For one thing, the money obtained from subscriptions was but a small portion of what was needed. In petitioning the state for aid in 1795, the directors stated that shares to the value of only \$35,475 had been sold by both companies, and about \$12,000 worth of these had been forfeited by reason of failure in pay-

ments. Again and again, the state had to give its aid. Then, too, the lack of experience, although inevitable, cost heavily in trouble and failures. The preliminary estimates, made by the inexperienced men who were advocating the improvements, were less than half the actual cost. Not till 1795 was an experienced engineer employed, and he had to be brought from England. Also there were the difficulties incident to the primitive conditions and the times. Even a quarter of a century later, when the original state-built canals were begun, much of their length lay through unbroken forests, and the difficulties attending that project were so great as to cause it to be regarded by many as impossible of accomplishment.

From a casual reading of the act of incorporation and from the usual conception of what constitutes a canal, one might get an entirely erroneous idea of the work done by these companies. No continuous waterway was built, but only short stretches of canal at portages and around falls or rapids. The natural streams had still to suffice for nearly all of the channel, being cleared of fallen timber where necessary and straightened in a few places. Nor were all of the contemplated stretches of artificial canal built. On the western route, three were constructed—at Little Falls, German Flats and Rome. The portage between Albany and Schenectady and that around the Oswego Falls (Fulton) were not touched. On the northern route, little of importance was accomplished. The amount expended on the western canal was \$480,000, and on the northern, \$100,000.

In the spring of 1795, William Weston, an able English engineer, was engaged, and remained in the service of the companies till 1799. Under his supervision, most of the construction was completed, including the rebuilding with stone of all the locks. After Weston returned to England, Benjamin Wright, acting as engineer, improved a stretch of six miles west of Wood Creek. The directors were so well pleased with his work that

he was ordered to extend his plans westward to Oneida Lake and from Rome to Schenectady, nearly 100 miles, but lack of funds prevented these plans from being carried into effect.

As to the benefits accruing to the state from these waterway improvements, there are differences of opinion. Most of our information on the affairs of these companies comes from two writers, Elkanah Watson and De Witt Clinton. Watson considered the improvements a success, while Clinton belittled the whole project, and even went so far as to say that if this work had never been undertaken, the most serious obstacles in the way of the state canal never would have existed. Another man, Jonas Platt, prominent all through early canal days, said, "Certain I am, that instead of facilitating, and encouraging subsequent canal operations, the companies were powerful impediments to the enterprise of the Erie Canal."

On the other hand, two illuminating facts were set forth by Watson. He said that when he made his preliminary investigation in 1791, nothing larger than flat boats of 1½ to 2 tons' capacity could be used, and at an expense of from \$75 to \$100 a ton in transporting from Schenectady to Seneca Falls. In 1796, after the completion of improvements, boats carrying from 15 to 16 tons were introduced, and the price of transporting between the same places was reduced to about \$32 a ton and half that sum on return cargoes. He added: "By the great reduction of the transportation, in consequence of the opening of the old canals, in 1796, it actually doubled the intrinsic value of lands and produce on these waters." Watson also maintained that the completion of these old canals excited a lively jealousy in Pennsylvania, as was evidenced in a speech of Governor Mifflin to the legislature in 1796, in which he said that the activity of New York in canal construction demanded extraordinary exertions on the part of Pennsylvania, in order to retain

the portion of commerce with the lakes and the western country which justly belonged to it.

The first decade of the nineteenth century had almost passed before anything better than the Western Company's canal was attempted. There was considerable discussion, however, as shown by several books, written a little later, in support of various claimants who were bitterly contending for the honor of having originated the canal idea. One man, Jesse Hawley, wrote and published several articles on the subject of canals.

The first definite action in the Erie Canal project was incited by a suggestion of President Jefferson to use the surplus Federal revenue, after paying the national debt, for improving canals and roads. In his second inaugural address, in March, 1805, he promulgated this idea; and in his message of December, 1806, he declared the surplus to be greater than was anticipated, and suggested applying it to the improvement of some great national object, which should be commenced at once.

Joshua Forman, Assemblyman from Onondaga, introduced the first Erie Canal legislation, and Benjamin Wright, the engineer for the old Western canal, Assemblyman from Oneida, seconded it. In describing the circumstances, Judge Forman said that, without much hope that the national government would do anything, nevertheless he framed the resolution as a response to the President's proposal, since it would have been denied legislative attention, he thought, had it proposed that the state should undertake the work alone. Even then it was received with astonishment, but was adopted on the ground that it could do no harm and might do some good. Forman's resolution, adopted in February, 1808, called for a survey of the most eligible and direct route between the Hudson and Lake Erie. The joint committee offered a resolution which directed the surveyor-general to make surveys of the streams along the

usual route and such other route as he might deem proper. Thus the legislators disregarded the intention of the original resolution, being unwilling to sanction what seemed to them so wild a project.

During the early days, there was much debate as to what route should be followed—whether the Ontario route, as the natural waterways course came to be known later, or an artificial channel in the interior straight through to Lake Erie, a route advocated partly on military grounds, since it lay well within our borders. Indeed it may be said that this debate never has been settled. In Barge Canal days, it came to the fore again; and if a ship canal should be built, it surely would be a burning topic. It was this idea of an interior route which constituted the original canal idea, for the honor of which the rival claimants were long contesting. Fortunate it was, indeed, that the interior route was chosen for the original canal. It brought abundant development, and no cheaper first cost would have compensated for the loss of that blessing.

James Geddes was appointed by the surveyor-general to make the surveys ordered by Forman's resolution. Thus both Wright and Geddes came early into canal affairs, being the first except the Englishman, Weston, to act in an engineering capacity. Later, the chief responsibility for building successfully the greatest canal ever undertaken up to that time was to rest on these two men.

Geddes made the surveys, and was ready with a report in January, 1809. He surveyed three routes from the interior to Lake Ontario, next a route between Lakes Erie and Ontario around Niagara Falls, and then through the western country, all at a cost of but \$673. Much to his delight, he established the practicability of a canal along the interior route. It is remarkable that the route selected for the original canal, largely the work of Geddes, was so nearly the best available that experi-

enced engineers of later days have been able to better it but little.

The report sent to President Jefferson brought no response. Judge Forman happened to be in New York on business in January, 1809, and he journeyed to Washington to see Jefferson. In answer to the Judge's appeal, the President replied that the undertaking, though desirable, was a century too soon, saying: "Why sir, here is a canal of a few miles, projected by General Washington, which, if completed, would render this a fine commercial city, which has languished for many years because the small sum of \$200,000 necessary to complete it, can not be obtained from the general government, the state government, or from individuals—and you talk of making a canal of 350 miles through the wilderness—it is little short of madness to think of it at this day."

Nine years elapsed between the introduction of Forman's resolution and the beginning of canal construction. These were years of gradually growing public interest in the canal project, inspired in large part by the more rapidly increasing need of better transportation. The War of 1812 was fought during this period, and while it turned the thoughts and the activities of the people from the canal project, it demonstrated more vividly than anything else the enormous waste of money imposed by inadequate transportation. It is said that a piece of ordnance worth \$400 at the foundry had cost the government \$2,000 delivered on the frontier, while a barrel of pork cost \$126.

The next legislation came in 1810, only two years after Forman's resolution and one year after the appeal to Jefferson, but meantime several significant things had happened. Albert Gallatin had presented an excellent report to Congress on internal navigation, in which two canals in New York were recommended. Senator Pope, of Kentucky, had introduced a bill for opening canals, among them being four in New York. Upon

a resolution of Congressman Peter B. Porter of Black Rock, near Buffalo, the House of Representatives had appointed a committee to consider the expediency of opening canals. The bill reported by this committee had recommended two New York canals. An able speech by Porter, accompanying his resolution, had been widely published in the journals of the day.

FIRST COMMISSION FOR A STATE-BUILT CANAL

The incidents attending the appointment of a commission are instructive. Thomas Eddy, the treasurer of the Western Company, being in Albany in March, 1810, called on Senator Jonas Platt and proposed the appointment of a state commission to explore the country between Oneida and Seneca Lakes, in order that the Western Company might extend its works. Platt suggested, in substitution, a larger scheme, an independent canal from the Hudson to Lake Erie, and unfolded a plan for a commission to examine the whole route, including passages both to Lake Ontario and to Lake Erie. Eddy objected that the magnitude of the plan would so frighten the legislature that nothing would be granted, and Platt replied that he thought the greater project could be carried if De Witt Clinton would give his aid. Clinton then exercised a powerful influence over the dominant party in the state, and Platt was leader of the minority in the Senate. The next morning they met Clinton in the Senate chamber, handed him a resolution that Platt had drafted, assured him that no political object was involved, and proposed that he should introduce the resolution. He said that he had given but little attention to canal navigation, but the subject appealed to him and he consented to second the measure. This appears to be the story of Clinton's entrance into canal affairs.

The resolution, which was passed unanimously by both Senate and Assembly, named as commissioners Gouverneur Morris,

Stephen Van Rensselaer, De Witt Clinton, Simeon De Witt, William North, Thomas Eddy and Peter B. Porter. The next year two others were added, Robert R. Livingston and Robert Fulton. These names explain, in part at least, why the canal idea grew more rapidly in public esteem from this time. The examination by Geddes, under authority of the 1808 legislation, was of more practical value than the exploration by all these commissioners, but its weight with the people was vastly less.

In the summer of 1810, the commissioners made their journey of exploration, accompanied by Geddes west of Utica. Clinton kept a private journal of the tour. A report was made to the legislature in March, 1811, which favored the inland route and declared the canal practical, but proposed a type of construction that was most unfortunate, laying the whole project open to ridicule. This was a canal which was to be an inclined plane, with uniform slope from Lake Erie to the ridge between Schenectady and Albany, and was to descend thence to the Hudson by locks. By this scheme, the canal was to be carried over the outlet of Cayuga Lake on an embankment a mile long and 130 feet high, and on an embankment 150 feet high at Schoharie Creek. The estimated cost was \$5,000,000.

The inclined plane was the idea of Gouverneur Morris, the president of the commission, to whom the drafting of the report was committed. In writing of this report later, Clinton said, concerning Morris, that he was "a man of elevated genius, but too much under the influence of a sublimated imagination." From a motive of delicacy, the commissioners refrained from changing what Morris had written. Clinton has been severely criticized for speaking thus of his friend, deceased when he spoke, and for not being willing to take blame for the faults, as well as praise for the success, of the enterprise.

One subject mentioned in this report of 1811 has a peculiar historical significance. The commissioners deprecated further

attempts to canalize the natural streams, saying, "Experience has long since exploded in Europe the idea of using the beds of rivers for internal navigation." When white men tried to adapt to larger commercial use the streams used for untold years by the Indians, they ran afoul of troubles too difficult for the skill of their day to overcome. As Benjamin Franklin, in a letter from London in 1772, quaintly put it, "Rivers are ungovernable things, especially in hilly countries. Canals are quiet and very manageable." Engineers have succeeded now in making rivers sufficiently quiet and manageable to be used for navigation, and river canalization is the accepted practice today. Moreover, the state canals have gone back now to the natural stream beds. The historical significance of this recital is that the development of the whole stretch of central New York, between Rome and Lyons, would have been long delayed and seriously curtailed, had the original Erie Canal followed the natural watercourses.

The legislature of 1811 empowered the commission to apply to Congress, or to the legislature of any state or territory, for coöperation and aid, and to secure grants of land through which the canal would pass. Also it was authorized to ascertain whether loans could be procured on the credit of the state. In attempting to secure Federal aid, two commissioners, Morris and Clinton, visited Washington. They found that a feeling of jealousy against New York existed among Congressmen, and so decided to include other states in any benefits to be given and not to seek an appropriation of money. They succeeded in interesting President Madison sufficiently to induce him to send a message to Congress commending the consideration of the subject. A bill was drafted, proposing a grant of lands in the territories of Michigan and Indiana to several of the states to aid them in building canals. A large committee to which the bill was referred decided, after much delay, to report favorably, but later,

for some reason unknown to the commissioners, reversed its decision. Of the states and territories appealed to, nine returned answers, but only three of these were at all favorable, and they promised nothing more than a helping vote in Congress.

In their report to the legislature in March, 1812, the commissioners said that, notwithstanding a scarcity of money in Europe, a loan of \$5,000,000 could be obtained there at 6 per cent for a term of ten or fifteen years. In this report, the plan for the long inclined plane was abandoned, but two such planes of considerable length were still retained. Fortunately, the inclined-plane idea seems to have vanished with this report. After another year, the commissioners still thought the canal could be built for \$5,000,000, but, lest they should be mistaken, they increased their estimate to \$6,000,000. The report strongly urged the immediate beginning of canal construction, in spite of the failure to obtain Federal aid.

Having reached this point, canal affairs were virtually at a standstill until December, 1815. The war with England was turning the thoughts of all away from nonessentials. A law of 1812 directed the commissioners to negotiate a loan of \$5,000,000, and to invest the money till it was needed for construction. No report was made until 1814, and then there was but little to be told by way of progress. The attempt to obtain a loan had failed, and in 1814 the act which had authorized the borrowing of this money was repealed.

The same three men—Eddy, Platt and Clinton—who had initiated canal activity in 1810, were responsible for its revival in 1815. Eddy invited Judge Platt, who was holding court in New York, to breakfast one morning, and proposed getting up a public meeting which should send a memorial to the legislature praying for canal construction. Platt agreed, and Eddy called on Clinton, then mayor of New York, and secured his cooperation. The meeting was held early in December, and out

of it came a document known in canal history as the "New York Memorial," ostensibly the work of a committee, but actually written by Clinton. "It produced an electrical effect throughout the whole country," said an early writer. The enthusiasm it aroused resulted in other meetings, and the adoption of similar memorials in nearly every city and village between Albany and Buffalo. Thus the attached signatures brought to the next legislature more than 100,000 petitioners asking for immediate canal construction. Clinton, who had recently been sent to Coventry by foes within his political party, now emerged again as the man of the hour.

Evidently the project had become popular, and the legislature of 1816 responded with a bill which, when it passed the Assembly, called for the commencement of work. It was amended in the Senate, however, on motion of another well-known man, Martin Van Buren, by striking out the clause authorizing construction. The Tammany politicians, with whom Van Buren now collaborated, still believed that the canal was a costly up-state project which would benefit their seaport city little, if at all. A contention arose between the two Houses, and the last day of the session arrived with neither being willing to recede. Finally the Assembly gave way, and the Senate bill passed.

This act proved to be the real beginning of the canal. It was followed the next year by a law which authorized construction. In spite of the contention in the Assembly that construction should commence at once, the surveys made in 1816 were surely needed before beginning work. No previous investigation had been so thorough or so detailed. With the act of 1816 there came into the project a new canal, the channel from the Hudson to Lake Champlain, known as the Champlain Canal.

For years the commissioners had tried to persuade William Weston to return to take charge of New York canal affairs. They offered him a salary of \$7,000, a large sum for that day.

Upon his final refusal they were in a very perplexing quandary. Then Geddes and Wright went to the commissioners and said that they were confident of their ability to locate and build the canal, but desired the commissioners to feel a like confidence. This confidence the commissioners gave, but in so doing they encountered severe censure.

On the Assembly floor it was tauntingly asked, Who is this James Geddes, and who this Benjamin Wright, that the Commissioners have trusted with this responsibility—what canals have they ever constructed? What great public works have they accomplished?

It was well that the commissioners were forced to employ the men at hand, both for the sake of American engineering and because there were thus trained the men to provide the improvements for the unprecedented development, throughout the whole land, which followed in the wake of the Erie Canal. In a letter to a son of Benjamin Wright we read:

The commissioners thought they must send for some great engineer from England . . . fearing to trust our common-place Americans. At length they settled upon that plain, unsophisticated and unpretending land surveyor—nothing but an old-fashioned land surveyor—Benjamin Wright, for the engineer on the Erie, and James Geddes on the Champlain canal.

Yet this old-fashioned land surveyor, beginning his engineering career at the age of forty-five, within the next twenty-five years became associated, as chief or consulting engineer, with the most important improvements on this continent. Geddes, who was sixty-two when the Erie was completed, responded to several invitations, but later declined others on account of his age. The associates of Geddes and Wright filled most of the other prominent engineering positions in the land, in their time.

The surveys and estimates were completed during 1816, and the commissioners made a lengthy report to the legislature on

February 17, 1817. To summarize the report in a single sentence, the Erie Canal would be 353 miles long, would have an aggregate rise and fall of 661 feet, to be overcome by 77 locks, and would cost \$4,881,738, an average of a little more than \$13,800 a mile. The Champlain Canal, reported on a month later, was estimated to cost \$871,000. The presentation of the commissioners' report was the signal for beginning a fierce struggle. Both Governor Tompkins and Lieutenant Governor Tayer were opponents of the project. Political issues complicated the fray. Governor Tompkins would become Vice President on March 4 and De Witt Clinton was aspiring to the office of governor. He had adopted the canals as a party issue, and this legislative contest became in part a test of strength between the opposing political parties.

In Congress, John C. Calhoun had introduced a measure for apportioning among the several states, for road and canal construction, the dividends from stock owned by the United States in the National Bank. This bill passed both Houses, but on March 3, as one of the last acts of his public life, President Madison vetoed it. Coming, as it did, in the midst of the canal struggle, this veto aroused a feeling of indignation in New York, which, however, seems to have helped canal interests. It made the people more than ever determined to build the canal, even if the state had to undertake the task without Federal aid of any kind.

The speech by Elisha Williams, just before the final vote in the Assembly, is often quoted: "If," said he, turning to a leading member of the New York City delegation, "if the canal is to be a shower of gold, it will fall upon New York; if a river of gold, it will flow into her lap." On April 15, 1817, an act authorizing the construction of the Erie and Champlain canals was passed. In the light of the future outcome, one of the hardest things to explain is the attitude of New York City on the

canal question, because every vote of its representatives, in both Senate and Assembly, was against the measure.

Before an act could become law it had to be approved by the Council of Revision—a body composed of the governor, the chancellor and the judges of the supreme court, which held the power of veto now possessed by the governor. In the Council, this act met an opposition which would have proved fatal, except for the accidental coming into the council chamber of an avowed foe of the canal and his bungling attempt to make certain the defeat of a measure already lost. One of the members of the Council, Jonas Platt, has vividly pictured the scene. Lieutenant Governor Tayler, as acting governor, was president of the Council, and one of the most formidable opponents of the canal. Chancellor Kent and Chief Justice Thompson, though feeling no hostility toward the canal, opposed the bill. Judge Yates and Judge Platt voted for it. This gave the deciding vote to the president, and he seemed eager to cast it. Near the close of the debate, Vice President Tompkins came in and took a seat familiarly among the members. He expressed a decided opinion against the bill. He said that the late peace with Great Britain was merely a truce and soon war would be renewed, and that, instead of wasting money on so chimerical a project, all the resources of the state should be employed immediately in preparing for war. Our narrator then continues:

“Do you think so, sir?” said Chancellor Kent. “Yes, sir,” was the reply; “England will never forgive us for our victories on the land, and on the ocean and the lakes; and my word for it, we shall have another war with her within two years.” The chancellor then rising from his seat, with great animation declared, “If we must have war, or have a canal, I am in favor of the canal, and I vote for the bill.” His voice gave us the majority; and so the bill became a law.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE ERIE CANAL

The time for beginning the construction of the state canals had come. July 4, 1817, witnessed the turning of the first spadeful of earth in actual construction. This was accompanied with appropriate ceremonies in the presence of an assembled crowd, and amid the acclamations of the people and the discharge of artillery. This took place just west of Rome, the stretch between Rome and Utica having been chosen as the first section to be built. The authorizing act had ordered the construction of the canal only in the central portion of the state; this eastern end of the line was the least encumbered with forests and other obstructions, while the remainder of the middle section ran through unopened territory. A son of Wright tells us that, as a lad, he assisted in the survey of 1816, and that he could count on the fingers of one hand the cultivated spots along the route between Rome and the Seneca River, a distance of 86 miles.

What the canal cost in endeavor may be more fully appreciated, if it is realized how much actual physical hardship was endured. As an example, a single instance may be cited. The excessive and long-continued heat of the summer of 1819 made the marsh land along the Seneca River a cause of much illness among the laborers. The commissioners in their annual report said:

Between the middle of July and the first of October about one thousand men employed on the canal from Salina to Seneca River were disabled by this cause. . . . It was impossible to prevent some jobs from being entirely abandoned for several weeks.

There was no Colonel Gorgas then, as on the Panama Canal, to dispel the gloom of this menace, nor even any human conception that one day medical science would make a miasmatic canal zone healthful.

Three among a number of labor-saving devices, which necessity forced the contractors to invent, are worth mentioning. The first consisted of a cable, one end of which was attached to the top of a tree and the other wound on a wheel worked by an endless screw. With this machine, one man could fell the largest tree. With a second machine, a team of horses and seven laborers could grub out forty stumps in a single day. A third invention was a plow with an extra cutting blade, for use among small roots and underbrush. These inventions called forth by the construction of the canal were adapted later to other uses.

The legislature of 1819 authorized construction from both ends of the middle section, westerly to Lake Erie and easterly to the Hudson. The commissioners determined to put under contract first the stretches from the Seneca River to Rochester, and from Utica to Little Falls. This action of extending the canal in both directions brings to light an attempt to throttle further construction to the west. Canal foes tried to strike another blow, their plan being to complete the eastern section first and, thus augmenting their strength with recruits from the more populous east, whose local needs would then have been satisfied, to prevent continuation to the west.

On October 22, 1819, the first boat to sail on the canal went from Rome to Utica. It was called "Chief Engineer" in honor of Benjamin Wright. From the descriptions of the event, it must have been carried along by the incoming waters as they were rushing eastward. Much interest was manifested. People were seen running across fields, climbing trees and fences, says the narrator, and crowding the banks to gaze on the welcome sight. The next morning, amid a merry peal of bells, the canal commissioners and a number of others embarked for a return trip to Rome. In May, 1820, navigation was opened on the 96 miles of completed canal of the middle section, and on July 4 a ceremony in celebration of its completion was held in Syracuse.

There were present people from all the surrounding counties, as well as distinguished men, including several state officials from various parts of the state. Shipping on the canal must have made a good beginning, for we read that seventy-three gayly decorated boats sailed in procession, as a part of the celebration.

In their report for the year 1819, the commissioners mentioned something that had a marked effect on all subsequent engineering work. In speaking of what they called waterproof lime, they said, "This material has been discovered in the progress of our exertions; and it will doubtless hereafter be considered as an article of prime necessity, throughout our country, for all hydraulic masonry." This discovery was made by Canvass White, one of the youngest of the early engineers to hold important positions, and to him belongs the honor of producing the first hydraulic cement in America. White's work on the canals began under Wright, in the surveys of 1816. In the autumn of 1817, he had visited England at his own expense and traveled more than two thousand miles on foot to inspect the canals. The cement used there interested him. The commissioners had made no provision for importing cement, because of its almost prohibitive cost. They were depending on common quicklime, but the masonry built with this common mortar had soon failed.

The story of the discovery is interesting. Certain men had contracted to furnish quicklime for canal structures.

They burned a large kiln and commenced the delivery of it. The purchasers, upon trial found that it would not slack. . . . The circumstance became common talk . . . and finally became known to the engineers, of whom Canvass White was one.

Experiments were made. Stone from the same ledge was burned, pulverized, mixed with sand, rolled into a ball, placed in a bucket of water over night, and in the morning was found to

have set. At considerable expense and by repeated experiments, White produced a cement which saved the state large sums that otherwise must have been spent on importations. He obtained a patent, but on promise from the commissioners of a just recompense he permitted its use on the canal. An attempt to secure an appropriation of \$10,000 to compensate him failed, however, although it was estimated that the contractors were liable for judgments totaling \$60,000, if suits had been brought.

In the fall of 1823, there was another celebration, much more elaborate than its predecessors. It marked the completion of the Erie Canal from the Genesee to the Hudson River, and the whole of the Champlain Canal.

In 1824, the Federal government attempted to exact tonnage duties on boats navigating the state canals, and to require from such boats enrollment and license. An act of Congress of February 18, 1793, which pertained to the regulation of commerce with foreign nations and the coasting trade of the United States, had been interpreted to include New York canal traffic. Naturally this aroused a strong feeling of resentment in the state. The refusal of the Federal government to give any aid whatsoever had not been forgotten. Moreover, no such attempt had been made to collect duties on the Middlesex Canal of Massachusetts, the James River Canal of Virginia, or the Dismal Swamp Canal of Virginia and North Carolina. So intense was the feeling manifested that the government abandoned its attempt.

An interesting incident accompanying canal construction deserves notice. Prior to the canal, little was known of geological formations across the state. The enthusiasm for canals led one of its friends, Stephen Van Rensselaer, a canal commissioner from 1810 to 1838, to supply the money for a thorough survey of the rock formations near the canal line, by an eminent geologist, Amos Eaton. This was the first extended geological

investigation in the state. The report of the survey, published in 1824, became a classic in New York geology, and an effective impulse to subsequent scientific surveys by the states themselves here and elsewhere. In this same year, Van Rensselaer, inspired largely by the canal, founded at Troy the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, which ever since has been sending forth some of the best engineers in the land.

As the time of completing the Erie Canal drew near, arrangements were made for celebrating the event in a manner unprecedented in the history of the country. On October 26, 1825, a fleet of boats bearing many distinguished persons entered the canal at Buffalo, on a triumphal procession to New York City. The event was heralded across the state, from lakes to ocean, in ninety minutes, by a grand salute from a battery 500 miles long, each cannon catching up the message in turn and passing it to its neighbor. The journey was a series of ovations, each city and village joining in the celebration as the fleet came along. Arriving at New York, the ceremony of "The Marriage of the Waters" was performed on November 4. The fleet, augmented by many additions, formed a circle off Sandy Hook, and Governor De Witt Clinton poured a keg of Lake Erie water into the ocean. To typify the commerce with all nations, the waters from fourteen great rivers—in Asia, Africa, Europe, South America and North America—were also poured into the ocean, with appropriate remarks from Dr. Samuel Latham Mitchill, the "Nestor of American Science." While this was happening upon the water, a procession five miles long was marching through the streets of the city. Three days later, the festivities were concluded with a ball. New York City had changed its mind about the Grand Canal. Two excellent mural decorations depicting scenes in this celebration, painted by C. Y. Turner in 1905, may be seen in the De Witt Clinton High School in New York City. It is difficult to understand what the canal meant

to the people of that day. Viewed through their eyes, these celebrations, though they may appear extravagant to us, seemed eminently fitting.

The difficulty of building along the steep rocky banks of the lower Mohawk caused the crossing, and then the recrossing, of the river upon two aqueducts, one being 748 feet long supported by sixteen piers, the other 1,188 feet long on twenty-six piers. The crossing of the Genesee on another long aqueduct was a feat that required skill. This structure had nine arches and was 802 feet long, by far the greatest stone structure built by early American engineers. At Lockport, the canal dropped abruptly over the Niagara escarpment. Here were set five double-combined locks, that is, two locks set side by side and five of these pairs placed end to end. The engineers had no precedents to follow. The man who planned them, Nathan S. Roberts, although he rose high in his profession later, said that the proudest moment in his career was the one in which the plans for these locks were accepted. At two places, heated contentions among the citizens arose over canal locations. The question at Schenectady was whether the line should be near the river, or through the city. The river line was partially constructed and then abandoned. John B. Jervis, an early canal engineer who later rose to highest prominence, tells at length the story of this contention. The controversy as to whether Buffalo or Black Rock should be the western terminus of the canal was long and bitter. Finally Buffalo won.

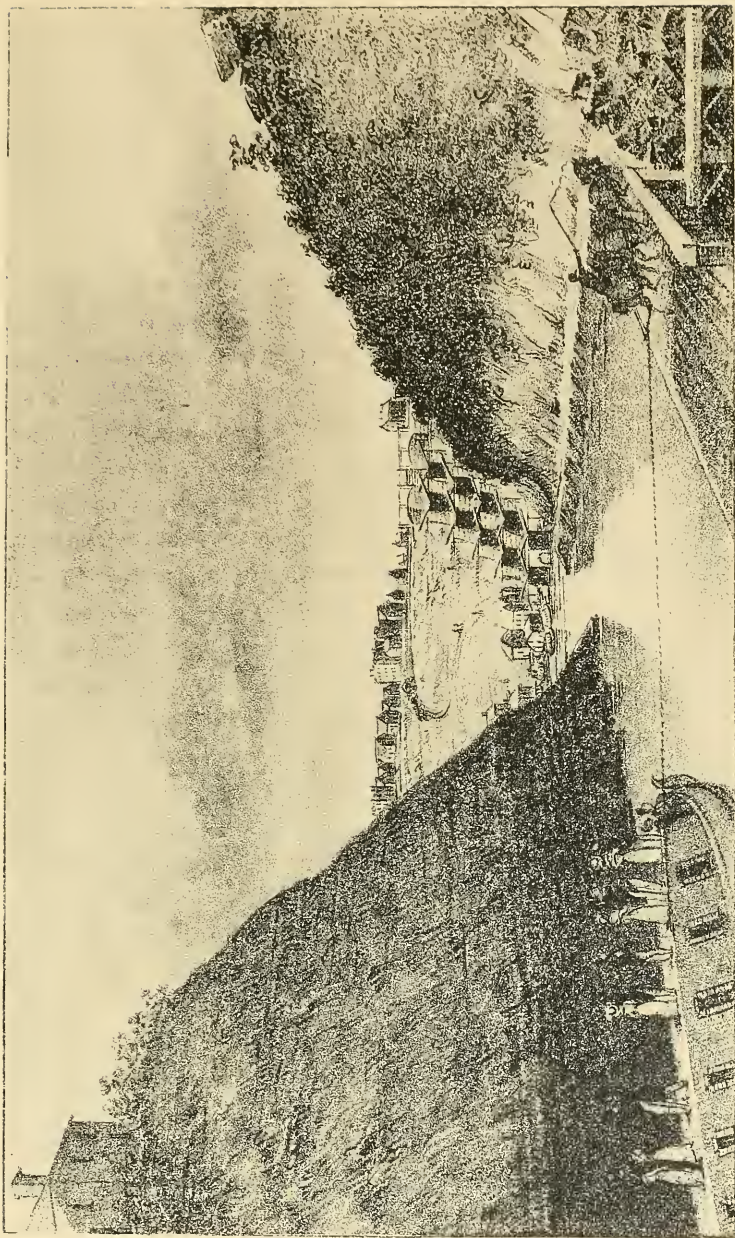
The Erie Canal was a marvelous success, so much so, indeed, that a veritable mania for canal building spread over the whole country. In New York this feeling manifested itself in a flood of petitions to the legislature for opening waterways, in the surveys of hundreds of miles of proposed routes, in the building of six additional state canals within the first decade, in beginning the construction of four more in the next four years, and in the

incorporation of thirty-eight private canal companies within two decades after the completion of the Erie. One act alone, the "great canal law" of 1825, ordered the surveys of seventeen contemplated canals. The Erie was not completed till almost the end of the season in 1825, but during that season 13,110 boats and rafts were cleared on the canals. The tolls collected that year amounted to \$566,221. In 1830, they had reached a total of \$1,056,922.

ENLARGEMENT AND LATERAL CANALS

But its very success reacted upon the canal to its detriment. Because of improved transportation, vast new areas were opened and developed, and these imposed a load on the waterway that it could not carry. Thus the success of the canal brought a new burden—the necessity for enlargement, the first step being taken in 1834. A special report of the commissioners recommended the doubling of all locks east of Syracuse. By this was meant the building of a second lock beside the existing lock. During the season of 1833, the number of lockages at a lock near Schenectady had been found to be more than 20,000. The commissioners considered that the capacity of 40,000 lockages, to be secured by doubling the locks, would suffice for only a short time, and soon longer locks and an enlarged channel would be needed. They recommended that the new locks should be ten feet longer than the existing structures. This record of 20,000 lockages at one point paints a vivid picture of the busy canal. It means that, on an average, a boat passed this lock every seventeen minutes, day and night, the whole season through.

The original dimensions of the Erie Canal channel were 40 feet width at water surface, 28 feet at bottom, and four feet depth of water; the locks were 90 feet long between gates, and 15 feet wide. The Champlain dimensions were the same, except



APPROACHING LOCKPORT

that the bottom width was 26 feet. In the enlargement of the Erie Canal, the standard channel section was 70 feet wide at water surface, 56 or 52½ feet at bottom, depending on certain conditions, with 7 feet depth of water. The locks were 110 feet long between gates and 18 feet wide. An act of 1834 authorized the doubling of the locks from Albany to Syracuse, but the canal commissioners did nothing under this law except to study the subject further and to report to the legislature of 1835 that the provisions of this statute would meet only immediate needs. An act passed in 1835 authorized the enlargement of the whole canal, both channel and locks, and the doubling of the locks. Work was started in August, 1836, but it was twenty-six years later, September 1, 1862, before the enlargement was completed, and even then it was simply called completed because the legislature had declared in effect, though not in words, that on that date it should be so considered.

There have been two subsequent enlargements of the Erie Canal. For both of these, and also for the original construction, adequate financial plans were adopted, but for the first enlargement no such provision was made. To understand why this happened and how it caused so protracted a period of construction, one must know something about the financial conditions of the time. Indeed, the history of this entire enlargement was as much one of finance as of engineering or construction.

The canal paid quickly the debt of its construction, about \$7,000,000. Then its revenue was turned toward defraying general governmental expenses. So far had the tolls exceeded expectations that dependence was being placed on them to pay for large improvements, besides helping with general expenses. In a way, it is not strange that people expected this. In 1825, the canal commissioners had made some extravagant predictions concerning tolls, and these were being more than ful-

filled. There had been no direct taxes since 1827, and public sentiment was opposed to borrowing money which might cause their renewal.

Governor Marcy, who was in office from 1833 to 1838, repeatedly warned against proceeding without adequate financial plans, but the legislature went on unconcernedly authorizing the enlargement of the Erie Canal and the construction of two new canals and the making of a large loan to a railroad, trusting to the canal tolls and the salt and auction duties to maintain the waterways, to pay the expenses of the government, and the cost of these improvements. In 1838, to expedite the work which had been going so slowly, the legislature sanctioned loans, but failed to provide for paying even the interest. Governor Seward took a more hopeful view of the financial situation than had his predecessor. In his messages, he boasted:

The most ardent advocates of the [canal] system failed altogether to conceive the vast tribute which it has caused already to flow into the treasury. . . . These great public works will continue to pour into the treasury a river of tribute.

It was inevitable that such a policy could not long survive. Hastened by the general financial depression of a few years earlier, it reached its end in 1842. Public improvements were stopped abruptly, and a tax was levied in order to pay the state's creditors. Canal construction was not resumed till 1847.

It is interesting to notice that during the season just prior to the stoppage of work there had been 30,320 lockages at one of the locks, an average of one every 10½ minutes. In reporting this circumstance, the commissioners said that lockages had to be made so frequently that the channel had not sufficient capacity to pass the required amount of water as fast as it was needed at the locks, thus the channel rather than the locks determining the ultimate capacity of the canal. As the work of

enlargement progressed, the legislature had asked the commissioners several times whether the doubling of the locks alone would not be enough. The invariable reply had been that nothing short of complete enlargement would suffice.

Meantime the Constitutional Convention of 1846 had been held, the calling of which was in considerable degree due to the canal policy. This convention devoted no small part of its labors to the canals and their financial policy. Judge Lincoln's close study of the canal questions before the convention renders his opinion of unusual value:

The debate [on canals] took a wide range, covering the whole field of canal history, and involving a discussion of policies, principles, political parties, and individuals. . . . The article [in the constitution of 1846], as a whole, preserved the credit of the state, pledged its revenues for the redemption of all state obligations, provided for the enlargement of the Erie canal and the completion of the Genesee Valley and Black River canals, authorized direct taxation to meet deficiencies, and prohibited the sale or other disposition of the canals.

It clearly defined the limits of future expenditures, and also provided for a generous allowance from canal revenues toward the payment of general state government expenses.

Since the Constitutional Convention of 1846, there have been two subsequent enlargements of the Erie Canal, the first a deepening to nine feet and the second the construction of what is known as the Barge Canal. The first enterprise was never completed. The second modernized as well as enlarged the canal, making of it an efficient river canalization, suitable for large self-propelled boats or fleets towed by powerful tugs.

Very briefly the building of other canals in the state will be described. Two of them, the Oswego, and the Cayuga and Seneca, were authorized in April, 1825, when the Erie was nearing completion. These are the two which had been included in the

old Western Company's plans, and also the two which, with the Erie and the Champlain, now constitute the Barge Canal system. When these two were completed, two more were built, the Crooked Lake and the Chemung, authorized in 1829; and in turn, as these were completed, two others were added, the Oneida Lake and the Chenango, authorized in 1832 and 1833 respectively. These reached completion at the beginning of the Erie Canal enlargement. During the early years of that larger undertaking, four more waterways were begun; the Black River and the Genesee Valley Canals, the Seneca River Towing-Path, all authorized in 1836, and the Oneida River Improvement, authorized in 1839. These ten branches compose the group of early lateral canals built while the desire was still strong for extending to all parts of the state the benefits of navigation. The four remaining state waterways are the Black River Improvement, authorized in 1839 but not begun till 1854; the Chenango Canal Extension, authorized in 1863; the Oneida Lake Canal (a new waterway), authorized in 1867; and the Shinnecock and Peconic Canal, joining bays on the north and south sides of eastern Long Island, and not connected with the other canals, authorized in 1884. Two canals built by private enterprise were of sufficient length and importance to be included among the main canals in the state. These are the Delaware and Hudson Canal, begun in 1825 and finished in 1829, and the Junction Canal, begun in 1852 and finished in 1858.

Besides reaching the major portions of the state available by waterways, these branches restored to use the natural route through Oneida Lake, established a Lake Ontario route in conjunction with the Welland Canal, opened the north country along the western fringe of the Adirondacks, reached the Allegheny River through the Genesee Valley, developed the anthracite coal region of eastern Pennsylvania, and tapped the central coal fields through the Pennsylvania canals, two routes con-

verging at Athens, one south through the Finger Lakes, and one southwest from Utica through Binghamton.

It has been seen how successful were the first canals, and also how they inspired confidence and led to the construction of numerous branches. But there came new conditions which greatly changed the whole matter of transportation; the pendulum of public opinion swung for a time to the extreme of disaffection. The question naturally arises, therefore, why should the people of the state have desired to improve the canals? Was there something intrinsically sound in the canal idea, something more than sentiment behind the keeping of the main branches, and then their improvement through three successive periods of enlargement? A brief review of the trade history of New York City will reveal one reason, perhaps the chief reason, for making these improvements, and will explain also the dependence of New York business interests on the canals throughout their entire existence. For this review, the *History of the Barge Canal* will be used, in its summarization of Edward R. Carhart's thorough study of the problem.

New York City early had added to its natural advantages others almost as powerful in their determining influence on the trade of the country. To mention only two—one the Erie Canal, the other a financial preëminence in the country, the latter giving control of resources that enabled the metropolis to make immediate advances on all produce seeking its ultimate market through that port. Unquestionably, the result of business originated by the canal was a period of uninterrupted progress and development lasting for over fifty years, a period of intense activity, of almost superhuman endeavor, of colossal enterprise, and of adjustment and readjustment to the needs of enlarging trade. During the whole period, aided by these two advantages, New York City maintained a proud supremacy; by its transportation and financial connections, it diverted the

trade of much of the Northwest from New Orleans. The open line of communication through its port with every part of the world, and an ability to finance the movement of the crops of the country, gave New York City an ascendancy in the grain trade and made it dictator of the flour and provision trades.

In the eighties, the commerce of New York City began to feel the effect of the great economic and industrial changes that were taking place throughout the country. These changes revolutionized trade everywhere, and in no place more than in the metropolis. Many new elements entered the situation, and they all contributed toward the revolution in trade methods and resulted in opening many new channels for the steadily enlarging trade of the country. To New York City, it all meant an active fight to hold the trade that formerly came to it without an effort. Other ports began actively to compete for a share of its export trade. Western states began to assert themselves as trading centers. Canada became a formidable competitor. And above all, railroads sought to divert some of its heavy export traffic by establishing differential rates in favor of other cities. It is no wonder, then, that when the old canal began to lose its real functioning power, commercial organizations started to agitate for a new canal, capable of doing for New York City under modern conditions what the old canal did for it previously. It was the old canal that had originated and developed its trade, and now when its trade was subject to assault on all sides, it was the new canal to which it looked for help.

A few words in regard to the sizes of boats used on the canals may be of interest. For the first few years of the original canal, or till about 1830, the boats had a capacity of only 30 tons. Then boats of 75 tons' capacity were used for some twenty years. During the last decade of the original canal, a 100-ton boat came into use. From the completion of the first enlargement to the advent of the Barge Canal, 240-ton boats were the

standard size. Original plans for the present canal provided for 1,000-ton barges, but before construction was more than begun, lock dimensions were enlarged, and now a boat of twice that capacity, or even an extreme of 2,500 tons, may be used. This is a thousand times the capacity of the largest boat which had been used on the smaller unimproved natural streams.

THE INFLUENCE OF NEW YORK'S CANAL SYSTEM

Another item of general interest has to do with the costs and earnings of the canals. When tolls were abolished in 1882, the Erie Canal had earned \$42,599,717 more than it had cost for construction, improvements and maintenance, which had amounted to \$78,862,154. The whole canal system, however, had only \$8,333,457 to its credit, the other canals having failed to pay for their cost and upkeep by \$34,266,260. Five years earlier, the state auditor had reported, as the direct financial returns from the canals, a total of \$376,903,861, made up of tolls and amounts received by carriers, merchants and warehousemen.

There is one outstanding fact which may not be fully grasped unless special attention is called to it. For a century, New York State, virtually unaided, has spent hundreds of millions in building and improving canals, knowing full well that the states to the west also have shared the benefits. This state should not have been compelled, single-handed, to furnish the waterway which has regulated the freight rates for half of the country, nor to supply the only means of offsetting the diversion of traffic to Canadian channels. Neither should she do what she has done for decades—pay the expense of accommodating half the export and import trade of the land and turn the receipts over to the Federal government, and then receive as compensation, if such it may be called, only 7 per cent of the moneys appropriated for river and harbor improvements. The jealousy

against New York, which Morris and Clinton found in Washington in 1811, seems still to exist.

No history of the New York canals would be complete without telling of the great influence these waterways exerted, particularly the Erie Canal, upon both state and nation. In order to ascertain how well founded were the many early attestations of this influence, the results of a systematic study of the subject, recently made in connection with the writing of the *History of the Canal System of New York*, may be included here in concise summary.

We are so accustomed to think of New York as ranking first among the states in commercial importance that it may be a surprise to learn that she did not always enjoy that proud distinction. Let us consider some of New York's rivals. There were on foot, late in the eighteenth century, projects much advocated, and emanating in one case at least from General Washington, which proposed to connect the head of Chesapeake Bay, Delaware Bay, or the Potomac River, with the Ohio and the lakes. Only the intervening high land deferred such construction. Had New York been less prompt, it seems probable that the inducement offered would ultimately have overcome the difficulties. Once built, a more southerly canal might have swept away New York City's prospective commercial glory, the joint product of its unique opportunities and its energetic farsighted policy.

This possibility assumes some degree of practical importance when it is considered that

heroic efforts were made [by Pennsylvanians] after the construction of the Erie canal to hold or capture their share of the internal trade. Every effort was made to link Lake Erie with the Ohio system and then with Philadelphia. Indeed, a great debt which for years after weighed heavily on Pennsylvania was contracted in the attempt.

The legislature was memorialized, public meetings were held, and a "Society for Promoting Industrial Improvements" was formed. In 1825 an address appeared, in which

it was said that in 1796 the aggregate exports of Philadelphia were forty per cent more than those of New York; whereas now they are forty-five per cent less. The difference was to be ascribed to the facilities for transportation afforded by the canals of New York.

With such enthusiasm prevailing, it seems not at all impossible that Pennsylvania, had it not been for the Erie Canal, would have succeeded ultimately in piercing the mountain barrier in time to secure for herself the commercial prestige which the canal in reality captured for New York State.

But of all the rivals which New York and its chief city met upon the sea, none put forth more strenuous efforts to secure the mastery than Massachusetts. These two states were the principal competitors for the export trade of the nation. In 1811, they were substantially on a par in this traffic. Then New York displayed a tendency to rise, which was curtailed by the war, but from 1816 it declined steadily, so that in 1821 Massachusetts still tenaciously rivaled New York. Had such a condition lasted until the extraordinary development of manufacturing which swept over New England about a decade later, this commercial rivalry might still have continued to threaten New York's supremacy. Although Massachusetts alone, of the states east and south of the old Northwest Territory, surpassed New York in growth from 1820 to 1840, on the basis of increase in population density, the underlying forces at work—the disappearance of money scarcity and war prices and, more than all else, internal improvements, chief of which was the Erie Canal—brought about a revulsion of commercial conditions. New York's decline in exports was followed by a general increase,

so that speedily it became the first export state in the Union, the value of its exports in 1841 being three times that of Massachusetts.

Misled by present comparisons, one might think, too, that New York City had always been both the dominating portion of the state and the metropolis of the nation; yet in 1820, the present bounds of Greater New York contained less than 10 per cent of the population of the state, and there was not as much business conducted at this port as at other Atlantic ports. It had been among the more backward of the colonial ports. In the last half decade of the eighteenth century, however, and the first few years of the nineteenth, New York City reached a higher rank. Then its export trade wavered and fell, and did not recover until some twenty years later, or about 1825. In reality, it did not become the metropolis of America until after the canal had made its influence felt and contributed its quota.

Corresponding with the period of stagnation, there was taking place a fundamental change in the character of our commerce. The carrying trade of the world, almost a monopoly with American seamen heretofore, was rapidly passing from our grasp. Former thrifty seaports became decadent. As foreign trade diminished, coastwise trade increased and, more auspicious still, the internal trade of the nation had its birth, came to the forefront rapidly, and grew to be the most important element in the wealth and prosperity of the states. Conditions were reversed. The factors which had made cities and seaports become insignificant. It was as though commerce were seeking a site for a great metropolis, the requisites being an ample harbor and a direct connection with the interior. The opportune building of the Erie Canal, we must repeat, made New York City the commercial metropolis of the nation. This new development distinguished the year 1820 as the beginning of a new epoch in the annals of New York City, setting down as

the great opening event the building of the Erie Canal and its early operation.

There was one famous rival port which was situated somewhat similarly, was liberally endowed by nature, and possessed prospects no less favorable than those of New York—probably far more promising in the eyes of the colonists—yet today that port has only one-tenth the combined export and import trade of our metropolis. A historian of Philadelphia, writing in the light of more than half a century of subsequent developments, focuses all of that light in one emphatic statement which, being like a forced confession rather than a voluntary tribute, possesses more than ordinary significance: “Be the cause whatever it may, the fact stands out prominent that from the completion of the Erie canal New York became what Philadelphia had previously been—the commercial emporium of the United States.” Other writers confirm this view.

A United States Senate committee, Senator William Windom, chairman, made a report in 1874 which stated that New York possessed the key to the national commercial situation, and that the Erie Canal had done more to advance the wealth, population and enterprise of the western states than all other causes combined. In a speech in 1878, Senator Windom said that Erie Canal rates exerted an influence over all other rates from the Gulf states to the Saint Lawrence River, and from the Atlantic Ocean to the foothills of the Rockies. In support of this statement, he introduced a letter from Albert Fink, than whom there was no higher authority on transportation in the United States, who said in substance that the Erie Canal influenced rates from Chicago and Saint Louis, as well as the Boston, Philadelphia and Baltimore rates, and also the rates from South Atlantic ports and the southern states generally, until it reached the line of influence of low ocean rates, all rail rates in fact being kept in check by water transportation. The circum-

stances attending this statement, said Senator Windom, coming as it did from one who was then acknowledged as the best-informed railway manager in the country, gave it the binding force of testimony elicited under cross-examination.

Mention will be made of but one other benefit that the Erie Canal bestowed upon the nation, leaving untouched the accounts of how the canal helped to people and develop the Middle West. Washington, in a letter to the Marquis de Chastellux in 1783, said, with the rare discernment of which he was capable, that

the western states . . . hang upon a pivot. The touch of a feather would turn them any way. They have looked down the Mississippi . . . because they had no other means of coming to us but by land transportation and unimproved roads.

A more recent student of transportation has said that "The opening of the Erie canal, in 1825, gave the first decisive impulse to commerce to move across the country instead of down the Ohio and Mississippi rivers." Had the Mississippi formed the principal outlet of the rich interior, no one will deny that the subsequent history of the nation would have been materially modified, in a twofold way — commercially and politically. More portentous than any commercial alliance between the Northwest and the South is the consequent probability that out of it there would have grown racial sympathy and political kinship, with what effect upon the great issues which culminated in the Civil War, or upon the present constituency of the American people, one may only conjecture.

This consideration leads directly to what is probably the most signal benefit the canal has bestowed upon the nation, what Washington in his Farewell Address recognized as the great need of the hour, what Clinton and Calhoun and other famous advocates of internal improvements deemed of first importance—

the service such works would perform in binding together, by a more extensive and sympathetic intercourse and interdependence, the great sections of the nation. And these men lived to see the forces they had set in action operating to accomplish the demolition of sectional jealousies, the upbuilding of mutual reliance, the dissolving of provinciality and the substitution therefor of a broad-minded community of interest and fraternity of spirit. All men could see then what only the few had discerned before, and the time has long since come when all men can understand why Lafayette pronounced the Erie Canal "an admirable work of science and patriotism."

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THE BEGINNINGS OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

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THE BEGINNINGS OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

FIRST EFFORTS TO INTRODUCE MACHINE PRODUCTION

NEW YORK, in 1790, was not a manufacturing state; neither were its sister commonwealths. During the colonial period, most of the people were engaged in agricultural pursuits. An abundance of cheap land, a sparse population, relatively high-priced labor, lack of capital, restrictive legislation by the mother country, and sometimes scarcity of raw materials, together with a preference by many of the colonists for British-manufactured goods, were the factors which contributed to hinder, in varying degree, manufacturing enterprise prior to the Revolution. During the War of Independence, the former colonists began to manufacture those articles which had been imported in large quantities, such as powder and firearms, and household manufactures, especially textiles. With the conclusion of peace, however, these new manufactures were made unprofitable by the British who, in their determination to retain the American market, flooded the young Republic with cheaper goods. Moreover, the same factors which had retarded development of colonial manufactures now continued to operate. Agriculture was still the leading occupation.

Notwithstanding these handicaps, the production of American manufactured goods during the years immediately preceding 1790 was astonishingly large. Alexander Hamilton, in his celebrated report of 1791 on manufactures, listed no less than seventeen distinct lines of manufacture, many of which were carried on within the boundaries of New York. With the exception of a few improvements which had been introduced in sawmills and in gristmills, the old handicraft methods of pro-

duction prevailed. The machine had not yet superseded the tool, and textiles, as well as other manufactured articles, were still produced by hand. In some localities, the slight division of labor noticeable before the Revolution had, by 1790, become more evident. Instead of each individual being a jack-of-all-trades, definite groups of artisan handicraftsmen were to be found in Albany, Poughkeepsie, New York and many smaller communities. Nevertheless the factory system, with its attendant characteristics, was yet to be introduced into the western world.

The absence of machine production in 1790 does not imply that the Americans were unfamiliar with the epoch-making change in manufacturing which at this time was under way in Great Britain. This change, affecting both technique and organization, and known as the Industrial Revolution, profoundly affected every phase of civilization. Characterized by the substitution of manufacture by complicated machines for manufacture by hand with simple tools, by the localization of industry and the rapid growth of factory towns, by subdivision of labor and an ever-increasing growth of capitalistic organization, and by an enormous increase in commodity production, this remarkable movement, whose roots ran back to the sixteenth century, within a hundred years transformed England from an agricultural nation into an urbanized manufacturing nation.

Several attempts were made to introduce the new productive processes before the opening of the nineteenth century, mainly in New England and the Middle States. In 1789, the New York Society for the Encouragement of American Manufactures, organized the preceding year, raised a considerable fund by popular subscription and set up the New York Manufacturing Society. Its factory at 21 Crown Street, later removed to Vesey Street, employed such machinery as had been in use in

England prior to the Arkwright improvements. Every effort was made to place the establishment upon a sound basis. Apprentices were engaged, looms for homes were offered to proficient weavers, and the support of the legislature and the citizenry was besought, on the plea of public policy. By December, 1789, the society had in its employ 14 weavers and over 130 spinners. Among the latter was the twenty-one-year-old Samuel Slater, lately arrived from England, and destined to be known as the father of the American factory system. Dissatisfied with the possibilities of the crude machinery in the New York factory, he accepted the invitation of Moses Brown, a Quaker merchant of Pawtucket, to go to Rhode Island. Here, with the aid of a local carpenter and a blacksmith, and working from memory, he succeeded in duplicating the inventions of Hargreaves and others. In partnership with Brown, he opened the first successful cotton factory in the United States. Meanwhile, the New York Manufacturing Society made desperate efforts to remedy the defects of its machines, but apparently without much success for on May 9, 1793, announcement of the sale of its manufacturing property appeared in the *Daily Advertiser*.

Another short-lived project, the New York Cotton and Linen Manufactory, was established about this time by David Dickson and John Livingston. This establishment had all the improvements of Arkwright and others, including a spinning mule—probably the first in America—and the new spinning shuttle designed after English and Scottish models. A breast water wheel, twenty feet in diameter, powering the machinery, utilized the ebb and flow of the tides at periods when stream water was low. More than a dozen skilled workmen from Manchester were among the company's employees. Largely because its mill site was unwisely chosen and too much money was invested in the fabrication of an inferior grade of goods,

this adventure, like its predecessor, proved unprofitable, and in 1794 Dickson and Livingston moved their machinery to New Haven. A third small concern in Brooklyn, employing a double carding machine, a slubbing and two spinning machines—all worked by horse power—manufactured yarn for housewives of the vicinity. These three are the only establishments, in the early unsuccessful attempts at organized cotton manufacture in New York State, of which any record remains. Ten years elapsed before the establishment of another cotton mill was undertaken.

FORCES IMPEDING THE FACTORY SYSTEM

Successful inauguration of the factory system of textile production was impeded by various circumstances, economic and technical. Competition of lower-priced British fabrics was perhaps the most direct handicap. In England, manufacturers had the advantage of larger capital, better credit facilities, greater bargaining power, improved technical equipment and cheaper labor. In these respects, the early New York manufacturers were deficient. Hired overseers added to the inefficiency of wasteful expenditure on equipment. There was, moreover, greater profit in commerce, agriculture and transportation, which pursuits fitted more profitably into the economic panorama of the period. Indeed, the Old World demand for American agricultural produce and the thriving condition of our commerce made it far more profitable to import manufactured goods than to produce them. The penetration of the surplus population to less restricted and cheaper farmsteads, in what are now the central and western parts of the state, rendered the labor supply unstable and expensive, and absorbed capital for the transportation of supplies and products. There existed an anti-industrial social and economic philosophy, which

undoubtedly had a somewhat discouraging influence. Finally, the absence of adequate tariff protection and Britain's attempt to monopolize the new industrial techniques should not be overlooked.

In the period between the failure of the early cotton factories and the inception of an enduring factory system, household manufacture continued to flourish. In the textiles, the movement toward division of labor became more pronounced. Fulling, carding, shearing, dyeing, bleaching and pressing were increasingly turned over to specialized establishments. Several mechanical developments operated to accelerate this tendency. In 1792, Samuel G. Dorr of Albany patented a shearing machine similar in principle to a modern lawn mower. This device, the first successful application of power to the shearing operation, could do the work of ten or twelve men. Wool-carding machines appeared at about the close of the century. Benjamin Bruce and Nicholas Bennett, of the Shaker Community at Mount Lebanon, for example, invented wool-carding machinery, the manufacture of which was an important source of revenue to the community for several years. Three years later (1803), in New York City, Samuel Whittemore established a factory for cotton and woolen cards—a business in which his brother had been engaged in Cambridge, Massachusetts. At the same time, an Englishman, George Booth, was setting up the first English-model wool-carding machines ever used in this country. Under date of July 3, 1803, *The Political Barometer* announced that Booth "is now erecting machines at Wappingers Creek, and will be ready to receive wool about the middle of the month." At first, housewives hesitated to patronize the invention, but inasmuch as twice the amount of yarn could be spun from a machine-carded roll as from a hand-carded one, its use soon became common. In 1810, it was officially reported that New York had 413 carding machines.

At that time, there were also in operation 427 fulling and cloth-dressing plants in the state. These shops were ubiquitous—newly erected beside a tumbling stream or utilizing the abandoned quarters of some saw or gristmill. As new communities grew sufficiently to constitute a demand, one or another enterprising villager constructed his mill race, set up his fulling or carding machinery, hired a few hands or put his children to work, and began to receive raw wool or woven material for pressing.

An accelerating device, invented in 1803 by Amos Macellus, of New York, increased the efficiency of spinning wheels. This invention, a gearing arrangement, doubled the velocity of the wheel and achieved a mechanical advantage of from 30 to 50 per cent. By its use, twenty men produced from six to nine thousand units a week. For the spinning of merino wool, the new wheel head was indispensable, and it could be utilized also for cotton and flax spinning.

The factory system of production, however, did not gain a permanent foothold in either state or nation until the period of the Napoleonic wars. This titanic conflict, featured by violations of neutrality, restrictive legislation—Non-Importation, Embargo and Non-Intercourse Acts—and by the War of 1812, though disastrous to shippers and to some agrarian interests, was a boon to American manufacturing. Cut off from the imports of Europe, Americans were forced to manufacture their own commodities, and capital formerly employed in trade and in shipping was transferred to manufacturing. Many of the scions of old respectable shipping families turned from the sea and the countinghouse to this new enterprise. As in Revolutionary days, home manufacture became a patriotic duty. Laws offering premiums for household fabrics were passed by the New York State legislature in 1808, and again in 1810. During the next five years, bounties and premiums for manufacture

were awarded at one time or another by every county in the state save New York, Richmond, Niagara, Putnam and Chautauqua. The result of this stimulation was phenomenal. In 1810 Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin reported that fully two-thirds of the clothing worn in the nation was American-made. He also declared that sufficient quantities of woolen and leather goods, soap, tallow candles, spermaceti oil, flaxseed oil, refined sugar, coarse earthenware, snuff, chocolate, hair powder and mustard were made to supply the needs of the entire population. Among the firmly established industries which supplied all, or a greater part, of the home consumption were the producers of iron goods, paper, malt and spirituous liquors, gunpowder, window glass and hats. Gallatin estimated that the total value of the nation's manufactures was not less than \$120,000,000 annually, a figure which Tench Coxe thought was too low.

New York State contributed handsomely to this increased industrial output. Not only was household production greatly enlarged, but factory-made goods were turned out in surprising volume. Particularly was this true of textile manufactures, as is shown in the following comparative table:

HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION OF TEXTILES, 1810^a

State	Yards of Cloth					Value	Per-Capita Value
	Cotton	Flax	Woolen	Mixed	Total		
Massachusetts	60,000	4,048,209	4,108,209	\$20,935.76	\$4.79
Pennsylvania.	611,481	2,990,622	990,346	1,801,025	6,400,479	42,506.75	5.23
New York...	216,013	5,394,186	3,257,812	180,659	9,048,670	50,222.51	5.24

^a This table is based upon Tench Coxe's *Statement of the Arts and Manufactures of the United States for the Year 1810*, Part IV, pp. 32-33, 44-45; R. M. Tryon's *Household Manufactures in the United States, 1640-1860*, pp. 170 ff.; *Niles' Weekly Register*, Vol. VI, p. 325; *American State Papers, Finance*, Vol. II, pp. 719 ff.

As early as 1804, Job Whipple, an enterprising miller of Greenwich, Washington County, drove to Rhode Island in search of

some one who would coöperate with him in setting up a cotton factory. He procured the services of William Mowry, a machinist employed in Slater's Pawtucket factory. Whipple furnished the capital and the mill site, and Mowry erected the establishment—the first successful mill in New York operating Arkwright machinery. Other communities followed Whipple's example. Early in 1809, Dr. Seth Capron, a recent arrival in Oneida County from the cotton manufacturing districts of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, bought land at Whitestown, at the confluence of the Oriskany and Sauquoit creeks. In company with others, notably Benjamin S. Walcott, a Rhode Island cotton manufacturer, Capron organized the Oneida Manufacturing Society, which built a factory on the recently purchased territory. This mill was intrusted to the management of Walcott's son. A local advertisement, under date of November 13, 1809, invited the public "to aid and cherish an institution calculated to support the independence of the country." By legislative enactment, the employees of the Oneida Manufacturing Society were exempted from jury service. The Columbia Manufacturing Society, a similar enterprise, purchased, in 1809, a mill site at Columbiaville, near Hudson, and contracted with James Wild, an English machinist, for equipment. The same year, at Pleasant Valley, Robert Abbott started cotton manufacture, in conjunction with his gristmill. At the close of 1809, New York had five cotton mills in operation, one each in Washington, Columbia and Oneida Counties, and two in Dutchess County.

CHANGES WROUGHT BY THE NAPOLEONIC WARS AND THE WAR OF 1812

As relations with England became more strained and prices for all kinds of manufactured articles greatly increased, the inducement to engage in manufacturing became stronger. Ac-

According to John Melish, the English traveler, who visited the northern states in 1810-11, capital from Utica and Albany was being increasingly invested in Oneida County manufactures. In 1811, the Oneida Manufacturing Society erected a woolen mill at Oriskany. A company of Quakers converted a sawmill at Paris, in the same county, into a woolen mill. Still another concern, the Whitestown Cotton and Woolen Manufacturing Company, organized in 1813 by B. S. Walcott, Jr., and his father-in-law, General Doolittle, came into being; and within the next few years the banks of the Oriskany and the Sauquoit were dotted with textile manufactories. At Milton, in 1811, Melish observed "an elegant new building, of seven stories high, which had recently been erected for the manufacture of woolen cloth." In the same year at Glenham, Dutchess County, a modest stone woolen mill was set up by Peter Schenck. Several other plants were put in operation in that county during the years 1811-15, including the stone mill of the Mattewan Manufacturing Company, organized by Schenck, John Jacob Astor and a group of New York capitalists. By the end of 1813, forty-three enterprises, devoted wholly or in part to the manufacture of textiles, had been incorporated in the state.

The textile factories operating during this period were of various types. In some cases, carding or fulling mills were enlarged to include spinning and weaving; in others, newly erected mills confined themselves to the manufacture of yarn, to be woven by the wives of neighboring farmers, or homespun yarn was received to be woven and processed on a share basis. Often textile manufactures were only a side line in an organization devoted primarily to another manufacture, such as that of iron or machinery. At the factory of the Oneida Society, cotton was cleaned of seeds and other waste in the homes, spun at the factory, and sold or farmed out for weaving. Ezra Wood operated a six-loom shop at Utica, for the weaving of cloth for the society. The Eagle Factory at Poughkeepsie offered, in 1815,

to "furnish cotton yarn for forty looms during the season which they wished to put out to weave at liberal prices." Factories were at first very small; the census of 1810 records only 12,293 power-operated spindles in the state. Mowry's mill at Greenwich had but 700 spindles in 1809, and the first Whites-town factory had only 300 in its first year. In 1815, however, a mill was erected at Ballston Spa, Saratoga County, with a capacity of 11,000 spindles.

Nearly all the textile mills built before 1815 were designed after the plan first introduced by Slater, with here and there some slight modification. The spinning equipment was what was usually known as the "water-frame," in sections of eight spindles each. Cotton machinery cost three or four times as much as in England. The spindles and much of the other machinery in Oneida County had to be imported at great expense. Only hand looms were employed in New York State during this period. Even in England, the innovations and improvements on the Cartwright patent of 1785 had not as yet proved more efficient than the hand loom. It was somewhat later that the first economically efficient power looms in New York, said to have been pirated from Rhode Island, were constructed in Oneida County.

Manufacturing equipment of the various textile mills was usually made on the site, by machinists from New England or Great Britain. The unexampled increase in the number of factories led, in 1812, to the establishment in New York City of the New York Manufacturing Company, for the production of cotton and woolen carding machines. Patent rights and machinery were purchased from the Whittemore concern, which had been operating since 1803. Until the end of the War of 1812, this factory was very prosperous. Gig mills, for teaseling and napping woolens, were used to some extent, but most of the finishing was done by hand. A shearing machine, which

could finish a yard of gigger cloth in one minute, was invented by Eleanor Hovey, and manufactured, after 1811, at New Lebanon. Bleaching, dyeing and printing of cotton fabrics was probably done at the mills, but there is little mention of that phase of factory production. Calico printing was started in a small way by Daniel Dean, at Pleasant Valley, in 1809. His print shop appears, however, to have been confined to decorating fabrics for housewives of the vicinity.

Most of the machinery during this period was driven by water wheels. The concentration of cotton manufacture in Oneida, Dutchess and Columbia Counties, and later at Cohoes below the falls of the Mohawk, resulted from the excellence of the power sites in those localities. Steam power did not come into use until 1815, and even then it was not used extensively. The first steam-operated cotton mills were erected that year at Ballston Spa. Power was transmitted by a walking-beam drive. After operation for a few months, the mechanism, built at a cost of \$80,000 for a group of local and New York City owners, broke down, and thereafter for some years the spinning equipment was run by water power.

While the factory system had thus secured a real foothold in the state by the end of the War of 1812, it faced a severe test in the years immediately following that conflict. Scarcely had peace been declared before British merchants and manufacturers, in their anxiety to empty their overstocked warehouses and regain their American markets, began to export enormous quantities of goods to the Western World. "It is worth while," said Henry Brougham in Parliament, "to incur a loss upon the first exportation in order, by a glut, to stifle in the cradle those rising manufactures in the United States which the war has forced into existence contrary to the natural course of things." Importations, which totaled only \$13,000,000 in 1813, mounted to \$147,000,000 in 1816. From New England

to Georgia, newspapers carried so many advertisements of British goods for sale that they had little available space for news. In order to maintain a brisk market, goods were sold on credit. Between 1815 and 1820, each inhabitant of the United States, upon an average, consumed imported goods to the value of \$13.50, as against \$2.50 per capita for the years 1810-14. In the face of this avalanche of competition and the rising price of raw materials occasioned by the reopening of the European market, our textile manufacturers were completely prostrated. The deluge of cheap foreign goods seemed to spell their ruination.

THE STATE BEFRIENDS INDUSTRY

Manufacturers, the country over, quickly turned to both the state and Federal governments for relief. In New York, a long struggle for supremacy ensued between the manufacturer and the importer. An address before the American Society for the Encouragement of Domestic Manufacturers in New York City in December, 1816, attacked the arguments against protection; and a resolution was passed to publish the speech and send memorials to the President and to Congress, as well as to state governors and legislatures. From Oneida came two memorials stating that that county contained more cotton and woolen manufactories than any other in the state, and that an investment of \$600,000 was endangered. Despite the efforts of the proprietors, three-fourths of the factories, the memorialists declared, had been forced to close. A joint committee of the state legislature reported in 1817 that the policy of Great Britain was calculated to crush American enterprise, and thus entail immense suffering to the poor. The legislators agreed to appear at their next session in clothes of American manufacture. Distress did not abate for manufacturer and employee, and in 1820 the American Society petitioned Congress, praying that

importation be forbidden except for products of American-grown cotton. A few years later, Governor Yates, in a message to the legislature, expressed concern that manufactures were not in the same prosperous state as agriculture; and a resolution by that body, addressed to Congress, asked for a tariff increase.

The effect of European competition upon New York's manufactures was intensified by other economic circumstances. At the end of the Napoleonic wars, high protection was given to Continental manufactures, which had developed during the conflict, making America the chief foreign market for English goods. The harvests of Europe were bad for several years; prices of food rose, and agriculture and transportation again became the predominant activities in New York. Cotton prices were elevated by the English demand, while prices of textile manufactures were constantly decreasing under pressure of importation from England. Even more important, the excessive issue of bank notes during this period contributed to a rise in wages and rents, as well as in prices. Factory owners were unable to obtain capital to improve their machinery, while manufacture in other countries was undergoing a rapid technical development. The period was abnormal, and America's manufactures bore the brunt of the abnormality.

Without giving a detailed account of the various tariff acts passed between 1816 and 1850, it may be said that the high-water mark of this legislation was reached in the tariff of 1828, or the "tariff of abominations." By the terms of this act, free trade was submerged beneath the most prohibitive rate schedule since the organization of the Union. In New York, there were sharp differences of opinion. Here, as in the South, flags were lowered to half-mast after the passage of the act. Merchants engaged in foreign trade could not see the justice of such high impositions. The standards of antiprotection were borne by

the *Morning Courier and Enquirer* and the *Evening Post*. Ranged against these were the manufacturers who individually and collectively benefited so greatly by the aid of a munificent government. From time to time, these latter united to apprise Washington of the necessity for continuing high tariff rates. The Friends of Domestic Industry, for example, met in New York City on October 26, 1831, and appointed committees to draw up reports reviewing the various fields of manufacturing. On July 4 of the following year, the results of a rather hasty investigation, together with a resolution urging the continuance of the protective principle while approving reduction in revenue, were forwarded to the United States Senate by the permanent central committee, of which Hezekiah Niles was chairman. A huge mass meeting at the City Hall in June, 1832, cheered protection speeches by Elijah Paine, Erastus Ellsworth and Gen. James Lynch. That New York manufacturers felt the hardships of Old World competition after the passage of the tariff of 1833 is unquestioned.

The tariff was hampered in the performance of its protective function in New York by the system of auctioning foreign goods under state sanction. In their fight against this practice the manufacturers had the support of the trading merchants. In 1817, auctioneers who handled the British dumping trade succeeded, by means of a powerful lobby, in inducing the legislature to reduce the state auction duty to $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent, and to require the positive sale of every article placed on the block. This of course meant that imported goods would be sold far below their value, and buyers came from far and wide. New York manufacturers and importers of goods for private sale could not hope to compete with the wide fluctuations in price at the auction rooms, where the British goods went, through agents, directly to jobbers and storekeepers. In 1825, these

sales totaled \$20,000,000 in New York City alone—a figure far in excess of the value of all the city's manufactures.

Not content with payment in simple promissory notes, as was customary, the auctioneers demanded that every note be indorsed. In case the debtor failed to meet his obligations when due, the auction houses promptly foreclosed on his property, much to the annoyance of other creditors. If the debtor's assets were insufficient to meet the claim, the indorser of his note became liable. To make matters worse, the Federal bankruptcy law multiplied the opportunities for defalcation by enabling the debtor to cancel his obligations and set up in business again, stocked by the auction men, who were amply protected by indorsements.

Equally irritating to New Yorkers, imbued with the principle of maintaining competition at all costs, were the monopolistic tendencies of the auction business. In 1828, a merchant's committee declared that one auction house concentrated in itself enough business to support fifty firms engaged in private sale. Among the monopolistic houses at this time were McLaughlin, Wiggins and Company; A. Cheever; J. and P. Hone; Boggs and Thompson; L. Power; Mills and Minton; Haggerty and Austen; John T. Boyd; Shotwell and Fox; and John B. Skillman. By 1830, no less than 42 firms in New York City alone were advertising public sales. Manufacturers and merchants repeatedly petitioned Congress for relief, but without avail. Abolition of auctions, they asserted, would be worth ten tariffs. In 1832, 165 New York City merchants pledged themselves not to purchase, for the period of one year, from any auctioneer who required indorsement of notes; who exhibited drygoods in lots of less than \$150 in value, except when these were in their original packages; who offered duplicate packages, not listed in their catalogues; or who refused to sell

a sample lot exhibited. Such private control was at length supplemented by governmental relief.

Though the state appeared seemingly oblivious of the fortunes of its manufacturers in the matter of auctions, it greatly favored them in the matter of incorporation. Up to the end of the first decade of the nineteenth century, the corporate form of organization was used in America mainly for undertakings involving a direct public interest, such as the construction of turnpikes, bridges and canals, the operation of banks and insurance companies, and the creation of fire brigades. Soon thereafter the corporation entered the field of industry. In March, 1811, the New York State legislature enacted its first general incorporation law. This law which, with its subsequent amendments, enabled manufacturers to take advantage of the manifold benefits of the corporate form, provided:

That at any time within five years . . . any five or more persons who shall be desirous to form a company for the purpose of manufacturing woollen, cotton or linen goods, or for the purpose of making glass, or for the purpose of making from ore, bar-iron, anchors, mill-irons, steel, nail rods, hoop iron and ironmongery, sheet copper, sheet lead, shot, white lead and red lead, may make, sign, and acknowledge before a justice of the supreme court, a judge of the court of common pleas, or a master in chancery, and file in the office of the secretary of this State, a certificate in writing, in which shall be stated the corporate name of the said company and the objects for which the said company is formed, the amount of the capital stock of the said company, the number of shares of which the said stock shall consist, the number of trustees and their names who shall manage the concerns of the said company for the first year, the names of the town and county in which the manufacturing operations of the said company are to be carried on.

The capital stock of corporations formed under this law was limited to \$100,000 (a figure nullified in practice). An act of

1816 continued the law of 1811 for another year, and extended the incorporation privilege to manufacturers of pins, beer, ale and porter. After a short lapse, the act was revived in 1818, and continued for another period of five years. Before this time expired, the legislators had become so convinced of its permanent value that they provided for its unlimited continuance. By 1827, a large number of concerns had incorporated. Among these were representatives of the chemical, paint, sugar-refining, marble, brick and wood-sawing industries, none of which were contained within the scope of the original act. Of the corporations listed at this time, about one-third of the number had a capital stock in excess of the \$100,000 limit laid down in 1811. Thus the Linen and Patent Cloth Companies of New York City were capitalized at \$400,000, the Sterling Iron Company at \$500,000, and the New York Manufacturing Company at \$1,200,000. More than half a century elapsed before the state defined and stabilized the attributes of the corporation. In this process, the courts, in a series of decisions, starting in 1826 with *Briggs v. Penniman* and continuing through *Bank of Poughkeepsie v. Ibbotson* in 1840, played an important rôle.

The state also endeavored to befriend its infant industries in the matter of taxation. By a legislative enactment of 1817, buildings, machinery and products of every manufactory of woolen, cotton and linen then existing, or to exist, were exempted from taxation. As an added inducement to engage in textile industries, manufacturers were exempted from militia duty, except in time of invasion, and from jury duty except in minor cases. This law continued on the statute books for six years, when it was nullified by a new law codifying tax procedure. The act of 1823 provided that "all property, real and personal, as is not exempted by some law of the United States, or of this State, or by the Constitution of this State,

shall be subject to taxation." The plaintiff in *Columbia Manufacturing Company v. Vanderpoel* maintained that under this enactment, textile manufacturers were still exempt by virtue of the saving clause in the 1817 act. The court, however, interpreted the 1823 act as a general repeal of the former exemptions, and declared that the clause quoted above was purely adventitious, inasmuch as it could refer only to subsequent laws which would automatically override its provisions.

Largely as a consequence of this ruling, taxes were levied not only on the lands, buildings, machinery and product of manufacturers, but, in the case of corporations, upon the capital when it yielded income or profits. Where capital stock yielded no income or profits, companies were not required to pay taxes on capitalization. This apparent boon lost its efficacy as a result of the court interpretation in *People ex rel. Commercial Insurance Company of New York City v. Supervisors of the City and County of New York*, in which it was held that "income" meant gross income and that, therefore, a corporation was tax liable if it received any income whatsoever, even though the year might have shown a net loss. Chief Justice Samuel Nelson, in justifying the decision, declared that taxation was not to be avoided merely because of inefficient use of capital. The burden imposed by this ruling was eased somewhat by a commutation provision in the Revised Statutes of 1827, by which all marine and manufacturing companies receiving an annual net income not in excess of 5 percent of their paid-up capital stock might elect to pay a tax of 5 percent on such net income. The other alternative was a tax of one mill on each dollar of real and personal property.

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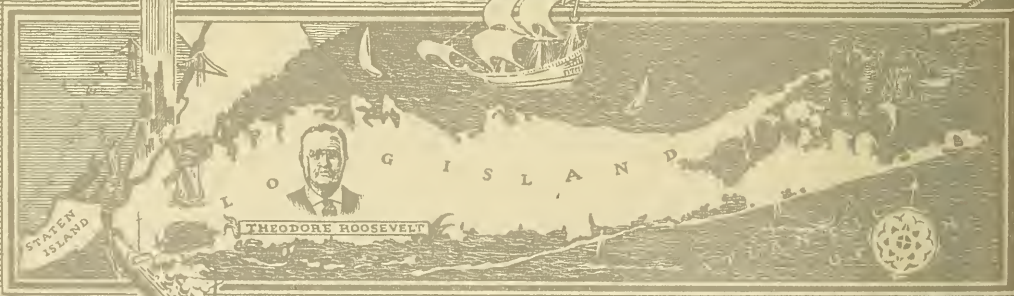
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